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CONTENTS.

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INTRODUCTION.

PAGE

CONTENTS AND CHARACTER, ORIGIN AND SOURCES, OF THE BOOKS OF THE KINGS, ... 1

FIRST BOOK OF THE KINGS.

I. HISTORY OF SOLOMON'S REIGN (Chaps. i.–xi.), . . . 15
- Anointing and Accession of Solomon (Chap. i.), . . 16
- David's Last Instructions and Death. Solomon ascends the Throne and fortifies his Government (Chap. ii.), . . 26
- Solomon's Marriage; Worship and Sacrifice at Gibeon; and Wise Judicial Sentence (Chap. iii.), . . . 37
- Solomon's Ministers of State. His Regal Splendour and Wisdom (Chap. iv.–v. 14), ... 43
- Preparations for Building the Temple (Chap. v. 15–32), . 57
- Building of the Temple (Chap. vi.), ... 65
- Solomon's Palace and the Furniture of the Temple (Chap. vii.), ... 88
- Dedication of the Temple (Chap. viii.), . . . 1 7
- The Answer to Solomon's Prayer. The Means employed for the Erection of his Buildings (Chap. ix.), . . . 138
- The Queen of Saba. Solomon's Wealth and Splendour (Chap. x.), ... 158
- Solomon's Polygamy and Idolatry. His Opponents and his Death (Chap. xi.), ... 166

PAGE

II. HISTORY OF THE KINGDOMS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH TO THE DESTRUCTION OF THE FORMER (Chap. xii.–2 Kings xvii.), . 183

1. *From the Division of the Kingdom to the Ascent of the Throne by Ahab in the 38th year of Asa King of Judah,* . . 190

Secession of the Ten Tribes from the House of David, and Founding of the Kingdom of Israel (Chap. xii.), . . 191

Testimony of God against the Calf-worship of Jeroboam (Chap. xiii.), ... 201

Reign and Death of Jeroboam and Rehoboam (Chap. xiv.), . 209

Reigns of the Two Kings Abijam and Asa of Judah (Chap. xv. 1–24), ... 217

Reigns of the Kings of Israel, Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, and Omri (Chap. xv. 25–xvi. 28), ... 222

2. *From Ahab's Ascent of the Throne to the Death of Joram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah,* 227

The Reign of Ahab of Israel (Chap. xvi. 29–34), . . 228

First Appearance of Elijah (Chap. xvii.), . . . 233

Elijah's Meeting with Ahab, and Victory over the Prophets of Baal (Chap. xviii.), ... 240

Elijah's Flight into the Desert, the Revelation of God at Horeb, and Elisha's Call to be a Prophet (Chap. xix.), . 252

Ahab's Double Victory over Benhadad of Syria (Chap. xx.), . 261

The Murder and Robbery of Naboth (Chap. xxi.), . . 269

War of Ahab and Jehoshaphat against the Syrians, and Death of Ahab. Reigns of Jehoshaphat of Judah and Ahaziah of Israel (Chap. xxii.), ... 273

SECOND BOOK OF THE KINGS.

Ahaziah's Illness. His Death announced by Elijah (Chap. i.), 284

Elijah's Ascension to Heaven. Elisha's First Miracles (Chap. ii.), 290

Joram of Israel, and the Expedition against Moab which he undertook in company with Jehoshaphat (Chap. iii.), . 300

Elisha works several Miracles (Chap. iv.), . . . 307

Curing of the Leprosy of Naaman the Syrian, and Punishment of Gehazi (Chap. v.), ... 316

PAGE

The Floating Iron. The Syrians smitten with Blindness (Chap. vi. 1–23), ... 323

Elisha's Action during a Famine in Samaria (Chap. vi. 24–vii. 20), ... 327

Elisha helps the Shunammite to her Property through the Honour in which he was held; and predicts to Hazael his Possession of the Throne. Reigns of Joram and Ahaziah, Kings of Judah (Chap. viii.), ... 333

Jehu anointed King. His Conspiracy against Joram. Joram, Ahaziah, and Jezebel slain (Chap. ix.), . . . 339

Extermination of the other Sons of Ahab, of the Brethren of Ahaziah of Judah, and of the Prophets of Baal (Chap. x. 1–27), ... 346

3. *From the Commencement of the Reigns of Jehu in Israel, and Athaliah in Judah, to the Destruction of the Kingdom of Israel,* 352

Reign of Jehu of Israel (Chap. x. 28–36), . . . 354

Tyranny and Overthrow of Athaliah, and Coronation of Joash (Chap. xi.), ... 355

Reign of King Joash of Judah, and Repairing of the Temple (Chap. xii.), ... 365

Reigns of Jehoahaz and Joash, Kings of Israel. Death of Elisha (Chap. xiii.), ... 373

Reigns of Amaziah of Judah, and Jeroboam II. of Israel (Chap. xiv.), ... 379

Reigns of Azariah of Judah, Zachariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, and Pekah of Israel, and Jotham of Judah (Chap. xv.), ... 386

Reign of King Ahaz of Judah (Chap. xvi.), . . . 397

Reign of Hoshea and Destruction of the Kingdom of Israel. The People carried away to Assyria and Media. Transportation of Heathen Colonists to Samaria (Chap. xvii.), . 409

III. HISTORY OF THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH FROM THE DESTRUCTION OF THE KINGDOM OF THE TEN TRIBES TO THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY (Chaps. xviii.–xxv.), ... 428

Reign of King Hezekiah. Sennacherib invades Judah and threatens Jerusalem (Chap. xviii.), ... 430

PAGE

Jerusalem delivered. Destruction of the Assyrian Army and Death of Sennacherib (Chap. xix.), ... 442

Hezekiah's Illness and Recovery. Merodach Baladan's Embassy. Death of Hezekiah (Chap. xx.), ... 460

Reigns of Manasseh and Amon (Chap. xxi.), ... 468

Reign of King Josiah (Chap. xxii. 1–xxiii. 30), . . . 473

Reigns of the Kings Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, and Jehoiachin (Chap. xxiii. 31–xxiv. 17), ... 496

Reign of Zedekiah, Destruction of Jerusalem and the Kingdom of Judah, and Fate of the People left behind, and of King Jehoiachin (Chap. xxiv. 18–xxv. 30), ... 509

BIBLICAL COMMENTARY

ON

THE OLD TESTAMENT.

THE BOOKS OF KINGS.

INTRODUCTION.

CONTENTS AND CHARACTER, ORIGIN AND SOURCES, OF THE BOOKS OF THE KINGS.

THE books of the Kings, which were but one book originally like the books of Samuel, and which, like the latter, were divided into two books by the Alexandrian translators (see the Introduction to the books of Samuel), contain, in accordance with their name (מלכים), the history of the Israelitish theocracy under the kings, from the accession of Solomon to the extinction of the monarchy on the overthrow of the kingdom of Judah, when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Chaldæans and the people were carried away into exile in Babylon. They embrace a period of 455 years, from 1015 to 560 B.C., that is to say, to the reign of the Babylonian king Evil-merodach. And as every kingdom culminates in its king, and the government of the kings determines the fate of the kingdom, the contents of the books before us, which are named after the kings of Israel, consist for the most part of a history of those kings; inasmuch as, whilst on the one hand the reigns of the several kings form the historical and chronological framework for the description of the historical development of the people and kingdom, on the other hand the leading phases which the monarchy assumed furnish the basis of the three periods, into which the history of this epoch and the contents of our books are divided.

The *first* period (1015–975 B.C.) embraces the forty years of

Solomon's reign over the undivided kingdom of the twelve tribes of Israel, when the Israelitish kingdom of God stood at the summit of its earthly power and glory; though towards the end of this period it began to decline, inasmuch as the rebellion of Solomon against the Lord in the closing years of his reign prepared the way for the rebellion of the ten tribes against the house of David.—The *second* period commences with the division of the one kingdom into the two kingdoms, Israel (or the ten tribes) and Judah, and stretches over the whole period during which these two kingdoms existed side by side, terminating with the destruction of the kingdom of the ten tribes by the Assyrians, *i.e.* from 975 to 722 B.C.—The *third* period embraces the still remaining years of the continuance of the kingdom of Judah, until its eventual dissolution by the Chaldæans and the carrying away of the people into exile in Babylon, viz. from 722 to 560 B.C.

The *first* part of our books (1 Kings i.–xi.) therefore contains a description of the reign of Solomon, (*a*) in its commencement, viz. his ascent of the throne and the consolidation of his power (ch. i. and ii.); (*b*) in the gradual development of the strength and glory of his government, by his marriage, his sacrifice and prayer at Gibeon, his judicial wisdom, and his court (iii. 1–v. 14),—also by the building of the temple and royal palace and the dedication of the temple (v. 15–ix. 9), by the erection of his other edifices and the introduction of navigation and commerce (ix. 10–28), by the spreading abroad of the fame of his wisdom, and by the increase of his wealth (ch. x.); and (*c*) in its eventual decline in consequence of the sin into which the aged monarch fell through his polygamy and idolatry (ch. xi.). The *second* part opens with an account of the falling away of the ten tribes from the royal family of David, and relates in a synchronistic narrative the history of the two kingdoms in the three stages of their development: viz. (*a*) the early enmity between the two, from Jeroboam to Omri of Israel (xii. 1–xvi. 28); (*b*) the establishment of friendship and intermarriage between the two royal houses under Ahab and his sons, down to the destruction of the two kings Joram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah by Jehu (xvi. 29–2 Kings x.); (*c*) the renewal of hostilities between the two kingdoms, from Jehu's ascent of the throne in Israel and Athaliah's usurpation of the throne in Judah to the overthrow of the kingdom of Israel in the sixth year of Hezekiah's reign in Judah (xi.–xvii.). And, lastly, the *third* part contains the history of the kingdom of Judah from Hezekiah to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldæans, and carries it down to the thirty-seventh year of the imprisonment of king Jehoiachin in exile (ch. xviii.–xxv.).

Now, although the history of the kings, or the account of both the duration and character of their reigns, and also of their various enterprises, so far as they promoted or hindered the progress of the kingdom of God, forms the principal substance of these books, they do not consist of a mere chronicle of the deeds and fortunes of the several kings, but describe at the same time the ministry of the prophets in the two kingdoms, and that to some extent in so elaborate a manner, that whilst some have discovered in this a peculiarly "prophetico-didactic purpose" (Hävernick, De Wette, etc.), others regard it as an endeavour "to set forth the history of the Israelitish and Jewish kings in its relation to the demands, the doings, the proclamations, and the predictions of the prophets, from Solomon to the Babylonian exile" (Kern). But however unmistakeable the prophetico-didactic character may be, which the books of Kings have in common with the whole of the historical writings of the Old Testament, a closer investigation of their character will show that there is no ground for the assertion that there is any prophetico-didactic purpose in the mode in which the history is written. For the account of the ministry of the prophets is introduced into the history of the kings as the spiritual leaven which pervaded the Israelitish monarchy from the beginning to the end, and stamped upon its development the character of the theocracy or divine rule in Israel. Jehovah, as the invisible but yet real King of the covenant nation, had created the peculiar instruments of His Spirit in the prophets who maintained His law and right before the kings, standing by their side to advise and direct, or to warn and punish, and, wherever it was necessary, proving their utterances to be words of God by signs and wonders which they did before the people. Thus the Lord directed the prophet Samuel to anoint Saul and David princes over His people, and the prophet Nathan to communicate to David the promise of the everlasting endurance of his throne (2 Sam. vii.). But when at a later period David sinned (2 Sam. xi. and xxiv.), it was the prophets Nathan and Gad who threatened him with punishment from God, and on his confession of sin and repentance announced the forgiveness and favour of God (2 Sam. xii. 1–15, xxiv. 11–19). Through the medium of the prophet Nathan, Solomon was also appointed the successor of David upon the throne (2 Sam. xii. 25), and not only anointed king, but installed in defiance of the machinations of Adonijah (1 Kings i.). But since the monarchy was transmitted from Solomon in a direct line through his descendants by virtue of the divine promise in 2 Sam. vii., it is only in connection with important enterprises, or when the kingdom is involved in difficulties, that we find the prophets coming forward in after times to help or advise those kings who walked in the ways of the Lord; whereas under the idolatrous and godless rulers they offer, in the power of God, such energetic resistance to idolatry and to everything evil and ungodly, that princes and people are compelled to bow before them and succumb to their divine words. In this way the prophets accompanied the monarchy in all its course from Solomon to the captivity as guardians of the rights of the God-King, and as interpreters of His counsel and will. Under Solomon, indeed, there was apparently a long period, during which prophecy fell into the background; since the Lord Himself not only appeared to this king in a dream at Gibeon shortly after he ascended the throne, but also appeared to him a second time after the dedication of the temple, and promised him the fulfilment of his prayers, and the glorification and eternal continuance of his kingdom, on condition of his faithful observance of the divine commands (1 Kings iii. 5 sqq., ix. 1 sqq.). But towards the end of his reign it rose up again in all the more threatening attitude, against the king who was then disposed to fall away from Jehovah. It was no doubt a prophet who announced to him the separation of ten parts of his kingdom (1 Kings xi. 11 sqq.),—possibly the same Ahijah who promised Jeroboam the government over ten tribes (xi. 29 sqq.). But after the division of the kingdom, when Jeroboam proceeded, in order to fortify his throne, to make the political division into a religious one, and to this end exalted the image-worship into the state religion, the prophets continued to denounce this apostasy and proclaim to the sinful kings the destruction of their dynasties. And when at a still later period Ahab the son of Omri, and his wife Jezebel, endeavoured to make the Phœnician worship of Baal and Asherah into the national religion in Israel, Elijah the Tishbite, "the prophet as fire, whose words burned as a torch" (Ecclus. xlviii. 1), came forward with the irresistible power of God and maintained a victorious conflict against the prophets and servants of Baal, warding off the utter apostasy of the nation by uniting the prophets into societies, in which the worship of God was maintained, and the godly in Israel were supplied with a substitute for that legal worship in the temple which was enjoyed by the godly in Judah. And in the kingdom of Judah also there were never wanting prophets to announce the judgments of the Lord to idolatrous kings, and to afford a vigorous support to the pious and God-fearing rulers in their endeavours to promote the religious life of the nation, and to exalt the public worship of God in the temple. But since the kingdom of Judah possessed the true sanctuary, with the legal worship and an influential body of priests and Levites; and since, moreover, the monarchy of the house of David was firmly established by divine promises resting upon that house, and among the kings who sat upon the throne, from Rehoboam onwards, there were many godly rulers who were distinguished for their lofty virtues as governors; the labours of the prophets did not assume the same prominent importance here as they did in the kingdom of the ten tribes, where they had to fight against idolatry from the beginning to the end.

This explains the fact that the ministry of the prophets assumes so prominent a position in the books of the Kings, whereas the history of the kings appears sometimes to fall into the background in comparison. Nevertheless the historical development of the monarchy, or, to express it more correctly, of the kingdom of God under the kings, forms the true subject-matter of our books. It was not a prophetico-didactic purpose, but the prophetico-historical point of view, which prevailed throughout the whole work, and determined the reception as well as the treatment of the historical materials. The progressive development of the kingdom was predicted and described by the Lord Himself in the promise communicated to David by the prophet Nathan: "And when thy days shall be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name; and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his Father, and he shall be my son, that if he go astray, I may chasten him with man's rod, and with stripes of the children of men; but my mercy will not depart from him, as I caused it to depart from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thy house and thy kingdom shall be for ever before thee, thy throne will be established for ever" (2 Sam. vii. 12–16). This thoroughly glorious promise forms the red thread which runs through the history of the kings from Solomon to the Babylonian captivity, and constitutes the leading idea in the record of this history in our books. The author's intention is to show in the history of the kings how the Lord fulfilled this gracious word, how He first of all chastised the seed of David for its transgressions, and then cast it off, though not for ever. To this end he shows in the history of Solomon, how, notwithstanding the usurpation of the throne attempted by Adonijah, Solomon received the whole of his father's kingdom, as the seed of David promised by the Lord, and established his power; how the Lord at the very beginning of his reign renewed to him at Gibeon the promise made to his father on the condition of his faithful observance of His law, and in answer to his prayer gave him not only a wise and understanding heart, but also riches and honour, so that his equal was not to be found among all the kings of the earth (1 Kings i. 1–v. 14); how Solomon then carried out the work of building the temple, entrusted to him by his father according to the will of the Lord; and how, after it was finished, the Lord again assured him of the fulfilment of that promise (ch. v. 15–ix. 9); and, lastly, how Solomon, having attained to the highest earthly glory, through the completion of the rest of his buildings, through the great renown of his wisdom, which had reached to nations afar off, and through his great riches, acquired partly by marine commerce and trade, and partly from tributes and presents, forgot his God, who had bestowed this glory upon him, and in his old age was led astray into unfaithfulness towards the Lord through his numerous foreign wives, and had at last to listen to this sentence from God: "Because thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and give it to thy servant: notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it, for David thy father's sake; but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit I will not rend away all thy kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen" (ch. ix. 10–xi. 13). Thus, because God had promised to the seed of David the eternal possession of the throne (2 Sam. vii. 12 sqq.), one portion of the kingdom was to be left to the son of Solomon, with the chosen city of Jerusalem, and his servant (Jeroboam, ch. xi. 26–40) was only to obtain dominion over ten tribes. The historical realization of this prophecy is shown in the history of the two divided kingdoms.

In the synchronistic account of these kingdoms, according to the principle already adopted in the book of Genesis, of disposing of the subordinate lines of the patriarchs before proceeding with the main line (see *Comm. on Pent.* vol. i. p. 37), the reigns of the kings of Israel are described before those of the contemporaneous kings of Judah, and to some extent in a more elaborate manner. The reason of this, however, is, that the history of the kingdom of Israel, in which one dynasty overthrew another, whilst all the rulers walked in the sin of Jeroboam, and Ahab even added the worship of Baal to that sin; supplied the author with more materials for the execution of his plan than that of the kingdom of Judah, which had a much quieter development under the rule of the house of David, and of which, therefore, there was less to relate. Apart from this, all the events of the kingdom of Judah which are of any importance in relation to the progress of the kingdom of God, are just as elaborately described as those connected with the kingdom of Israel; and the author does equal justice to both kingdoms, showing how the Lord manifested Himself equally to both, and bore with them with divine long-suffering and grace. But the proof of this necessarily assumed different forms, according to the different attitudes which they assumed towards the Lord. Jeroboam, the founder of the kingdom of Israel, when told that he would be king over the ten tribes, had received the promise that Jehovah would be with him, and build him a lasting house as He built for David, and give Israel to him, on condition that he would walk in the ways of God (1 Kings xi. 37, 38). This implied that his descendants would rule over Israel (of the ten tribes) so long as this kingdom should stand; for it was not to last for ever, but the separation would come to an end, and therefore he is not promised the everlasting continuance of his kingdom (see at 1 Kings xi. 38). But Jeroboam did not fulfil this condition, nor did any of the rulers of Israel who succeeded him. Nevertheless the Lord had patience with the kings and tribes who were unfaithful to His law, and not only warned them continually by His prophets, and chastised them by threats of punishment and by the fulfilment of those threats upon the kings and all the people, but repeatedly manifested His favour towards them for the sake of His covenant with Abraham (2 Kings xiii. 23), to lead them to repentance—until the time of grace had expired, when the sinful kingdom fell and the ten tribes were carried away to Media and Assyria.—In the kingdom of David, on the contrary, the succession to the throne was promised to the house of David for all-time: therefore, although the Lord caused those who were rebellious to be chastised by hostile nations, yet, for His servant David's sake, He left a light shining to the royal house, since He did not punish the kings who were addicted to idolatry with the extermination of their family (1 Kings xv. 4; 2 Kings viii. 19); and even when the wicked Athaliah destroyed all the royal seed, He caused Joash, the infant son of Ahaziah, to be saved and raised to the throne of his fathers (2 Kings xi.). Consequently this kingdom was able to survive that of the ten tribes for an entire period, just because it possessed a firm political basis in the uninterrupted succession of the Davidic house, as it also possessed a spiritual basis of no less firmness in the temple which the Lord had sanctified as the place where His name was revealed. After it had been brought to the verge of destruction by the godless Ahaz, it received in Hezekiah a king who did what was right in the eyes of Jehovah, as his father David had done, and in the severe oppression which he suffered at the hands of the powerful army of the proud Sennacherib, took refuge in the Lord, who protected and saved Jerusalem, "for His own and His servant David's sake," at the prayer of the pious king of Jerusalem (2 Kings xix. 34, xx. 6). But when at length, throughout the long reign of Manasseh the idolater, apostasy and moral corruption prevailed to such an extent in Judah also, that even the pious Josiah, with the reformation of religion which he carried out with the greatest zeal, could only put down the outward worship of idols, and was unable to effect any thorough conversion of the people to the Lord their God, and the Lord as the Holy One of Israel was obliged to declare His purpose of rejecting Judah from before His face on account of the sins of Manasseh, and to cause that purpose to be executed by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings xxiii. 26, 27, xxiv. 3, 4); Jehoiachin was led away captive to Babylon, and under Zedekiah the kingdom was destroyed with the burning of Jerusalem and the temple. Yet the Lord did not suffer the light to be altogether extinguished to His servant David; but when Jehoiachin had pined in captivity at Babylon for thirty-seven years, expiating his own and his fathers' sins, he was liberated from his captivity by Nebuchadnezzar's son, and raised to honour once more (2 Kings xxv. 27–30).—The account of this joyful change in the condition of Jehoiachin, with which the books of the Kings close, forms so essential a part of their author's plan, that without this information the true conclusion to his work would be altogether wanting. For this event shed upon the dark night of the captivity the first ray of a better future, which was to dawn upon the seed of David, and with it upon the whole nation in its eventual redemption from Babylon, and was also a pledge of the certain fulfilment of the promise that the Lord would not for ever withdraw His favour from the seed of David.[1]

Thus the books of the Kings bring down the history of the Old Testament kingdom of God, according to the divine plan of the kingdom indicated in 2 Sam. vii., from the close of David's reign to the captivity; and the fact that in 1 Kings i. 1 they are formally attached to the books of Samuel is an indication that they are a continuation of those books. Nevertheless there is no doubt that they formed from the very first a separate work, the independence and internal unity of which are apparent from the uniformity of the treatment of the history as well as from the unity of the language. From beginning to end the author quotes from his original sources, for the most part with certain standing formulas; in all important events he gives the chronology carefully (1 Kings vi. 1, 37, 38, vii. 1, ix. 10, xi. 42, xiv. 20, 21, 25, xv. 1, 2, 9, 10, etc.); he judges the conduct of the kings throughout according to the standard of the law of Moses (1 Kings ii. 3, iii. 14; 2 Kings x. 31, xi. 12, xiv. 6, xvii. 37, xviii. 6, xxi. 8, xxii. 8 sqq., xxiii. 3, 21, etc.); and he nearly always employs the same expressions when describing the commencement, the character, and the close of each reign, as well as the death and burial of the kings (compare 1 Kings xi. 43, xiv. 20, 31, xv. 8, 24, xxii. 51; 2 Kings viii. 24, xiii. 9, xiv. 29; and for the characteristics of the several kings of Judah, 1 Kings xv. 3, 11, xxii. 43; 2 Kings xii. 3, xiv. 3, xv. 3, etc.; and for those of the kings of Israel, 1 Kings xiv. 8, xv. 26, 34, xvi. 19, 26, 30, xxii. 53; 2 Kings iii. 2, 3, x. 29, 31, xiii. 2. 11, etc.). And so, again, the language of the books remains uniform in every part of the work, if we except certain variations occasioned by the differences in the sources employed; since we find throughout isolated expressions and forms of a later date, and words traceable to the Assyrian and Chaldæan epoch, such as כֹּר for חֹמֶר in 1 Kings v. 2, 25; צִדֹנִין in 1 Kings xi. 33; רָצִין in 2 Kings xi. 13; מְדִינוֹת in 1 Kings xx. 14, 15, 17, 19; קָבָל in 2 Kings xv. 10; שָׂרֵי הַחֲיָלִים in 1 Kings xv. 20, 2 Kings xxv. 23, 26; רַב טַבָּחִים in 2 Kings xxv. 8; פֶּחָה in 1 Kings x. 15, xx. 24, 2 Kings xviii. 24; and many others, which do not occur in the earlier historical books.—The books of the Kings are essentially distinguished from the books of Samuel through these characteristic peculiarities; but not so much through the quotations which are so prominent in the historical narrative, for these are common to all the historical books of the Old Testament, and are only more conspicuous in these books, especially in the history of the kings of the two kingdoms, because in the case of all the kings, even of those in relation to whom there was nothing to record of any importance to the kingdom of God except the length and general characteristics of their reign, there are notices of the writings which contain further information concerning their reigns.—The unity of authorship is therefore generally admitted, since, as De Wette himself acknowledges, "you cannot anywhere clearly detect the interpolation or combination of different accounts." The direct and indirect contradictions, however, which Thenius imagines that he has discovered, prove to be utterly fallacious on a closer inspection of the passages cited as proofs, and could only have been obtained through misinterpretations occasioned by erroneous assumptions. (See, on the other hand, my *Lehrbuch der Einleitung in das A. T.* p. 184 sqq.)

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[1] Stähelin makes the following remark in his *Einleitung* (p. 122): "The books of the Kings form an antithesis to the history of David. As the latter shows how obedience to God and to the utterances of His prophets is rewarded, and how, even when Jehovah is obliged to punish, He makes known His grace again in answer to repentance; so do the books of the Kings, which relate the overthrow of both the Hebrew states, teach, through the history of these two kingdoms, how glorious promises are thrown back and dynasties fall in consequence of the conduct of individual men (compare 1 Kings xi. 38 with xiv. 10, and still more with 2 Kings xxi. 10 sqq. and xxiii. 27). The sins of one man like Manasseh are sufficient to neutralize all the promises that have been given to the house of David." There is no need to refute this erroneous statement, since it only rests upon a misinterpretation of 2 Kings xxi. 10 sqq., and completely misses the idea which runs through both books of the Kings; and, moreover, there is no contradiction between the manifestation of divine mercy towards penitent sinners and the punishment of men according to their deeds.

All that can be determined with certainty in relation to the *origin* of the books of Kings is, that they were composed in the second half of the Babylonian captivity, and before its close, since they bring the history down to that time, and yet contain no allusion to the deliverance of the people out of Babylon. The author was a prophet living in the Babylonian exile, though not the prophet Jeremiah, as the earlier theologians down to Hävernick have assumed from the notice in the Talmud (*Baba bathra,* f. 15, 1): *Jeremias scripsit librum suum et librum Regum et Threnos.* For even apart from the fact that Jeremiah ended his days in Egypt, he could hardly have survived the last event recorded in our books, namely, the liberation of Jehoiachin from prison, and his exaltation to royal honours by Evil-merodach. For inasmuch as this event occurred sixty-six years after his call to be a prophet, in the thirteenth year of Josiah, he would have been eighty-six years old in the thirty-seventh year after Jehoiachin had been carried away into exile, even if he had commenced his prophetic career when only a young man of twenty years of age. Now, even if he had reached this great age, he would surely not have composed our books at a later period still. Moreover, all that has been adduced in support of this is seen to be inconclusive on closer inspection. The similarity in the linguistic character of our books and that of the writings of Jeremiah, the sombre view of history which is common to the two, the preference apparent in both for phrases taken from the Pentateuch, and the allusions to earlier prophecies,—all these peculiarities may be explained, so far as they really exist, partly from the fact that they were written in the same age, since all the writers of the time of the captivity and afterwards cling very closely to the Pentateuch and frequently refer to the law of Moses, and partly also from the circumstance that, whilst Jeremiah was well acquainted with the original sources of our books, viz. the annals of the kingdom of Judah, the author of our books was also well acquainted with the prophecies of Jeremiah. But the relation between 2 Kings xxiv. 18 sqq. and Jer. lii. is not of such a nature, that these two accounts of the destruction of Jerusalem and the carrying away of the remnant of the people could have emanated from the hand of Jeremiah; on the contrary, a closer inspection clearly shows that they are extracts from a more elaborate description of this catastrophe (see at 2 Kings xxiv. 18 sqq.).

As *sources* from which the author has obtained his accounts, there are mentioned, for the history of Solomon, a סֵפֶר דִּבְרֵי שְׁלֹמֹה, or book of the acts (affairs) of Solomon (1 Kings xi. 41); for the history of the kings of Judah, סֵפֶר דִּבְרֵי הַיָּמִים לְמַלְכֵי יְהוּדָה, book of the daily occurrences of the kings of Judah (1 Kings xiv. 29, xv. 7, 23, xxii. 46; 2 Kings viii. 23, xii. 20, etc.); and for that of the kings of Israel, סֵפֶר דִּבְרֵי הַיָּמִים לְמַלְכֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, book of the daily occurrences of the kings of Israel (1 Kings xiv. 19, xv. 31, xvi. 5, 14, 20, 27, xxii. 39; 2 Kings i. 18). These are quoted as writings in which more is written concerning the life, the deeds, and the particular undertakings, buildings and so forth, of the several kings. The two last-named works were evidently general annals of the kingdoms: not, indeed, the national archives of the two kingdoms, or official records made by the מַזְכִּירִים of the reigns and acts of the kings, as Jahn, Movers, Stähelin, and others suppose; but annals composed by prophets, and compiled partly from the public year-books of the kingdom or the national archives, and partly from prophetic monographs and collections of prophecies, which reached in the kingdom of Israel down to the time of Pekah (2 Kings xv. 31), and in that of Judah to the time of Jehoiakim (2 Kings xxiv. 5). Moreover, they were not written successively by different prophets, who followed one another, and so carried on the work in uninterrupted succession from the rise of the two kingdoms to the death of the two kings mentioned; but they had been worked out into a "*Book of the history of the times of the Kings*" for each of the two kingdoms, a short time before the overthrow of the kingdom of Judah, by collecting together the most important things that had been written both concerning the reigns of the several kings by annalists and other historians who were contemporaneous with the events, and also concerning the labours of the prophets, which were deeply interwoven with the course of public affairs, whether composed by themselves or by their contemporaries. And in this finished form they lay before the author of our work. This view of the annals of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel follows unquestionably from the agreement which exists between our books of the Kings and the second book of the Chronicles, in the accounts common to both, and which can only be explained from the fact that they were drawn from one and the same source. But in the Chronicles there are different writings of individual prophets quoted, beside the day-books of the kings of Judah and Israel; and it is expressly stated in relation to some of them that they were received into the annals of the kings (compare 2 Chron. xx. 34 and xxxii. 32, and the Introduction to the books of the Chronicles). Moreover, there are no historical traces of public annalists to be found in the kingdom of the ten tribes, and their existence is by no means probable, on account of the constant change of dynasties. The fact, however, that the frequently recurring formula "to this day" (1 Kings ix. 13, x. 12; 2 Kings ii. 22, x. 27, xiv. 7, xvi. 6, [xvii. 23, 34, 41,] xx. 17, xxi. 15) never refers to the time of the captivity, except in the passages enclosed in brackets, but always to the time of the existing kingdom of Judah, and that it cannot therefore have emanated from the author of our books of the Kings, but can only have been taken from the sources employed, is a proof that these annals of the kingdom were composed towards the close of the kingdom of Judah; and this is placed beyond all doubt, by the fact that this formula is also found in many passages of the books of the Chronicles (compare 1 Kings viii. 8 with 2 Chron. v. 9; 1 Kings ix. 21 with 2 Chron. viii. 8; 1 Kings xii. 19 with 2 Chron. x. 19; and 2 Kings viii. 22 with 2 Chron. xxi. 10).—In a similar manner to this must we explain the origin of the סֵפֶר דִּבְרֵי שְׁלֹמֹה, since three prophetic writings are quoted in 1 Chron. xxix. 29 in connection with Solomon's reign, and their account agrees in all essential points with the account in the books of the Kings. Nevertheless this "history of Solomon" never formed a component part of the annals of the two kingdoms, and was certainly written much earlier.—The assumption that there were other sources still, is not only sustained by no historical evidence, but has no certain support in the character or contents of the writings before us. If the annals quoted were works composed by prophets, the elaborate accounts of the working of the prophets Elijah and Elisha might also have been included in them.—Again, in the constant allusion to these annals we have a sure pledge of the historical fidelity of the accounts that have been taken from them. If in his work the author followed writings which were composed by prophets, and also referred his readers to these writings, which were known and accessible to his contemporaries, for further information, he must have been conscious of the faithful and conscientious employment of them. And this natural conclusion is in harmony with the contents of our books. The life and actions of the kings are judged with unfettered candour and impartiality, according to the standard of the law of God; and there is no more concealment of the idolatry to which the highly renowned Solomon was led astray by his foreign wives, than of that which was right in the eyes of God, when performed by the kings of the ten tribes, which had fallen away from the house of David. Even in the case of the greatest prophet of all, namely Elijah, the weakness of his faith in being afraid of the vain threats of the wicked Jezebel is related just as openly as his courageous resistance, in the strength of the Lord, to Ahab and the prophets of Baal.—Compare my *Einleitung in das Alte Test.* §§ 56–60, where adverse views are examined and the commentaries are also noticed.

EXPOSITION.

FIRST BOOK OF THE KINGS.

I.—HISTORY OF SOLOMON'S REIGN.

Chaps. i.–xi.

DAVID had not only established the monarchy upon a firm basis, but had also exalted the Old Testament kingdom of God to such a height of power, that all the kingdoms round about were obliged to bow before it. This kingdom was transmitted by divine appointment to his son Solomon, in whose reign Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sand by the sea-shore, and dwelt in security, every man under his vine and under his fig-tree (ch. iv. 20, v. 5). The history of this reign commences with the account of the manner in which Solomon had received the kingdom from his father, and had established his own rule by the fulfilment of his last will and by strict righteousness (ch. i. and ii.). Then follows in ch. iii.–x. the description of the glory of his kingdom, how the Lord, in answer to his prayer at Gibeon, not only gave him an understanding heart to judge his people, but also wisdom, riches, and honour, so that his equal was not to be found among the kings of the earth; and through his wise rule, more especially through the erection of the house of Jehovah and of a splendid royal palace, he developed the glory of the kingdom of God to such an extent that his fame penetrated to remote nations. The conclusion, in ch. xi., consists of the account of Solomon's sin in his old age, viz. his falling into idolatry, whereby he brought about the decay of the kingdom, which manifested itself during the closing years of his reign in the rising up of opponents, and at his death in the falling away of ten tribes from his son Rehoboam. But notwithstanding this speedy decay, the glory of Solomon's kingdom is elaborately depicted on account of the typical significance which it possessed in relation to the kingdom of God. Just as, for example, the successful wars of David with all the enemies of Israel were a prelude to the eventual victory of the kingdom of God over all the kingdoms of this world; so was the peaceful rule of Solomon to shadow forth the glory and blessedness which awaited the people of God, after a period of strife and conflict, under the rule of *Shiloh* the Prince of peace, whom Jacob saw in spirit, and who would increase government and peace without end upon the throne of David and in his kingdom (Isa. ix. 5, 6; Ps. lxxii.).

CHAP. I. ANOINTING AND ACCESSION OF SOLOMON.

The attempt of Adonijah to seize upon the throne when David's strength was failing (vers. 1–10), induced the aged king, as soon as it was announced to him by Bathsheba and the prophet Nathan, to order Solomon to be anointed king, and to have the anointing carried out (vers. 11–40); whereupon Adonijah fled to the altar, and received pardon from Solomon on condition that he would keep himself quiet (vers. 41–53).

Vers. 1–4. When king David had become so old that they could no longer warm him by covering him with clothes, his servants advised him to increase his vitality by lying with a young and robust virgin, and selected the beautiful Abishag of Shunem to perform this service. This circumstance, which is a trivial one in itself, is only mentioned on account of what follows,—first, because it shows that David had become too weak from age, and too destitute of energy, to be able to carry on the government any longer; and, secondly, because Adonijah the pretender afterwards forfeited his life through asking for Abishag in marriage.—The opening of our book, וְהַמֶּלֶךְ (*and* the King), may be explained from the fact that the account which follows has been taken from a writing containing the earlier history of David, and that the author of these books retained the *Vav cop.* which he found there, for the purpose of showing at the outset that his work was a continuation of the books of Samuel. זָקֵן בָּא בַּיָּמִים as in Josh. xiii. 1, xxiii. 1, Gen. xxiv. 1, etc. "*They covered him with clothes, and he did not get warm.*" It follows from this that the king was bedridden, or at least that when lying down he could no longer be kept warm with bed-clothes. בְּגָדִים does not mean clothes to wear here, but large cloths, which were used as bed-clothes, as in 1 Sam. xix. 13 and Num. iv. 6 sqq. יִחַם is used impersonally, and derived from חָמַם, cf. Ewald, § 193, *b*, and 138, *b*. As David was then in his seventieth year, this decrepitude was not the natural result of extreme old age, but the consequence of a sickly constitution, arising out of the hardships which he had endured in his agitated and restless life. The proposal of his servants, to restore the vital warmth which he had lost by bringing a virgin to lie with him, is recommended as an experiment by Galen (*Method. medic.* viii. 7). And it has been an acknowledged fact with physicians of all ages, that departing vitality may be preserved and strengthened by communicating the vital warmth of strong and youthful persons (compare Trusen, *Sitten Gebräuche u. Krankheiten der Hebräer*, p. 237 sqq.). The singular suffix in לַאדֹנִי is to be explained on the ground that one person spoke. נַעֲרָה בְתוּלָה, a maid who is a virgin. עָמַד לִפְנֵי, to stand before a person as servant = to serve (cf. Deut. i. 38 with Ex. xxiv. 13). סֹכֶנֶת, an attendant or nurse, from סָכַן = שָׁכַן, to live with a person, then to be helpful or useful to him. With the words "that she may lie in thy bosom," the passage passes, as is frequently the case, from the third person to a direct address.—Vers. 3, 4. They then looked about for a beautiful girl for this purpose, and found *Abishag* of *Shunem*, the present *Sulem* or *Solam*, at the south-eastern foot of the *Duhy* or Little Hermon (see at Josh. xix. 18), who became the king's nurse and waited upon him. The further remark, "and the king knew her not," is not introduced either to indicate the impotence of David or to show that she did not become David's concubine, but simply to explain how it was that it could possibly occur to Adonijah (ch. ii. 17) to ask for her as his wife. Moreover, the whole affair is to be judged according to the circumstances of the times, when there was nothing offensive in polygamy.

Vers. 5–10. Adonijah seized the opportunity of David's decrepitude to make himself king. Although he was David's fourth son (2 Sam. iii. 4), yet after the death of Ammon and Absalom he was probably the eldest, as Chileab, David's second son, had most likely died when a child, since he is never mentioned again. Adonijah therefore thought that he had a claim to the throne (cf. ch. ii. 15), and wanted to secure it before his father's death. But in Israel, Jehovah, the God-King of His people, had reserved to Himself the choice of the earthly king (Deut. xvii. 15), and this right He exercised not only in the case of Saul and David, but in that of Solomon also. When He gave to David the promise that his seed should rule for ever (2 Sam. vii. 12–16), He did not ensure the establishment of the throne to any one of his existing sons, but to him that would come out of his loins (*i.e.* to Solomon, who was not yet born); and after his birth He designated him through the prophet Nathan as the beloved of Jehovah (2 Sam. xii. 24, 25). David discerned from this that the Lord had chosen Solomon to be his successor, and he gave to Bathsheba a promise on oath that Solomon should sit upon the throne (vers. 13 and 30). This promise was also acknowledged in the presence of Nathan (vers. 11 sqq.), and certainly came to Adonijah's ears. Adonijah said, "I will be king," and procured chariots and horsemen and fifty runners, as Absalom had done before (2 Sam. xv. 1). רֶכֶב, in a collective sense, does not mean fighting or war chariots, but state carriages, like מֶרְכָּבָה in 2 Sam. xv. 1; and פָּרָשִׁים are neither riding nor carriage horses, but riders to form an escort whenever he drove out.—Ver. 6. "And (=for) his father had never troubled him in his life (מִיָּמָיו, *a diebus ejus*, *i.e.* his whole life long), saying, Why hast thou done this?" Such weak oversight on the part of his father encouraged him to make the present attempt. Moreover, he "was very beautiful," like Absalom (see at 2 Sam. xiv. 25), and born after Absalom, so that after his death he appeared to have the nearest claim to the throne. The subject to יָלְדָה is left indefinite, because it is implied in the idea of the verb itself: "she bare," *i.e.* his mother, as in Num. xxvi. 59 (*vid.* Ewald, § 294, *b*). There was no reason for mentioning the mother expressly by name, as there was nothing depending upon the name here, and it had already been given in ver. 5.—Ver. 7. He conferred (for the expression, compare 2 Sam. iii. 17) with Joab and Abiathar the priest, who supported him. עָזַר אַחֲרֵי פ׳, to lend a helping hand to a person, *i.e.* to support him by either actually joining him or taking his part. Joab joined the pretender, because he had fallen out with David for a considerable time (cf. ii. 5, 6), and hoped to secure his influence with the new king if he helped him to obtain possession of the throne. But what induced Abiathar the high priest (see at 2 Sam. viii. 17) to join in conspiracy with Adonijah, we do not know. Possibly jealousy of Zadok, and the fear that under

Solomon he might be thrown still more into the shade. For although Zadok was only high priest at the tabernacle at Gibeon, he appears to have taken the lead; as we may infer from the fact that he is always mentioned before Abiathar (cf. 2 Sam. viii. 17, xx. 25, and xv. 24 sqq.). For we cannot imagine that Joab and Abiathar had supported Adonijah as having right on his side (Thenius), for the simple reason that Joab did not trouble himself about right, and for his own part shrank from no crime, when he thought that he had lost favour with the king.—Ver. 8. If Adonijah had powerful supporters in Joab the commander-in-chief and the high priest Abiathar, the rest of the leading officers of state, viz. Zadok the high priest (see at 2 Sam. viii. 17), Benaiah, captain of the king's body-guard (see at 2 Sam. viii. 18 and xxiii. 20, 21), the prophet Nathan, Shimei (probably the son of Elah mentioned in ch. iv. 18), and Rei (unknown), and the Gibborim of David (see at 2 Sam. xxiii. 8 sqq.), were not with him.—Vers. 9 sqq. Adonijah commenced his usurpation, like Absalom (2 Sam. xv. 2), with a solemn sacrificial meal, at which he was proclaimed king, "at the stone of *Zocheleth* by the side of the fountain of *Rogel*," *i.e.* the spy's fountain, or, according to the Chaldee and Syriac, the fuller's fountain, the present fountain of Job or Nehemiah, below the junction of the valley of Hinnom with the valley of Jehoshaphat (see at 2 Sam. vii. 17 and Josh. xv. 7). E. G. Schultz (*Jerusalem, eine Vorlesung*, p. 79) supposes the stone or rock of *Zocheleth* to be "the steep, rocky corner of the southern slope of the valley of Hinnom, which casts so deep a shade." "This neighbourhood (Wady *el Rubâb*) is still a place of recreation for the inhabitants of Jerusalem." To this festal meal Adonijah invited all his brethren except Solomon, and "all the men of Judah, the king's servants," *i.e.* all the Judæans who were in the king's service, *i.e.* were serving at court as being members of his own tribe, with the exception of Nathan the prophet, Benaiah, and the Gibborim. The fact that Solomon and the others mentioned were not included in the invitation, showed very clearly that Adonijah was informed of Solomon's election as successor to the throne, and was also aware of the feelings of Nathan and Benaiah.

Vers. 11–31. Adonijah's attempt was frustrated by the vigilance of the prophet Nathan.—Vers. 11 sqq. Nathan informed Solomon's mother, Bathsheba (see at 2 Sam. xi. 3), that Adonijah was making himself king (כִּי מָלַךְ, that he had become [as good as] king:. Thenius), and advised her, in order to save her life and that of her son Solomon (וּמַלְּטִי, and save = so that thou mayest save; cf. Ewald, § 347, *a*), to go to the king and remind him of his promise on oath, that her son Solomon should be king after him, and to inquire why Adonijah had become king. If Adonijah had really got possession of the throne, he would probably have put Solomon and his mother out of the way, according to the barbarous custom of the East, as his political opponents.—Ver. 14. While she was still talking to the king, he (Nathan) would come in after her and confirm her words. מִלֵּא דָבָר, to make a word full, *i.e.* not to supply what is wanting, but to make full, like *πληροῦν*, either to fill by accomplishing, or (as in this case) to confirm it by similar assertion.—Vers. 15–21. Bathsheba followed this advice, and went to the king into the inner chamber (הַחַדְרָה), since the very aged king, who was waited upon by Abishag, could not leave his room (מְשָׁרַת for מְשָׁרֶתֶת; cf. Ewald, § 188, *b*, p. 490), and, bowing low before him, communicated to him what Adonijah had taken in hand in opposition to his will and without his knowledge. The second וְעַתָּה is not to be altered into וְאַתָּה, inasmuch as it is supported by the oldest codices and the Masora,[1] although about two hundred codd. contain the latter reading. The repetition of וְעַתָּה ("And *now*, behold, Adonijah has become king; and *now*, my lord king, thou knowest it not") may be explained from the energy with which Bathsheba speaks. "*And* Solomon thy servant he hath not invited" (ver. 19). Bathsheba added this, not because she felt herself injured, but as a sign of Adonijah's feelings towards Solomon, which showed that he had reason to fear the worst if Adonijah should succeed in his usurpation of the throne. In ver. 20, again, many codd. have וְעַתָּה in the place of וְאַתָּה; and Thenius, after his usual fashion, pronounces the former the "only correct" reading, because it is apparently a better one. But here also the appearance is deceptive. The antithesis to what Adonijah has already done is brought out quite suitably by וְאַתָּה: Adonijah has made himself king, etc.; but thou my lord king must decide in the matter. "The eyes of all Israel are turned towards thee, to tell them who (whether Adonijah or Solomon) is to sit upon the throne after thee." "The decision of this question is in thy hand, for the people have not yet attached themselves to Adonijah, but are looking to thee, to see what thou wilt do; and they will follow thy judgment, if thou only hastenest to make Solomon king."—Seb. Schmidt. To secure this decision, Bathsheba refers again, in ver. 21, to the fate which would await both herself and her son Solomon after the death of the king. They would be חַטָּאִים, *i.e.* guilty of a capital crime. "We should be punished as though guilty of high treason" (Clericus).—Vers. 22 sqq. While Bathsheba was still speaking, Nathan came. When he was announced to the king, Bathsheba retired, just as afterwards Nathan went away when the king had Bathsheba called in again (cf. ver. 28 with ver. 32). This was done, not to avoid the appearance of a mutual arrangement (Cler., Then., etc.), but for reasons of propriety, inasmuch as, in audiences granted by the king to his wife or one of his counsellors, no third person ought to be present unless the king required his attendance. Nathan confirmed Bathsheba's statement, commencing thus: "My lord king, thou hast really said, Adonijah shall be king after me . . . ? for he has gone down to-day, and has prepared a feast, . . . and they are eating and drinking before him, and saying, Long live king Adonijah!" And he then closed by asking, "Has this taken place on the part of my lord the king, and thou hast not shown thy servants (Nathan, Zadok, Benaiah, and Solomon) who is to sit upon the throne of my lord the king after him?" The indirect question introduced with אִם is not merely an expression of modesty, but also of doubt, whether what had occurred had emanated from the king and he had not shown it to his servants.—Vers. 28–30. The king then sent for Bathsheba again, and gave her this promise on oath: "As truly as Jehovah liveth, who hath redeemed my soul out of all distress (as in 2 Sam. iv. 9), yea, as I swore to thee by Jehovah, the God of Israel, saying, Solomon thy son shall be king after me, . . . yea, so shall I do this day." The first and third כִּי serve to give emphasis to the assertion, like *imo*, yea (cf. Ewald, § 330, *b*). The second merely serves as an introduction to the words.—Ver. 31. Bathsheba then left the king with the deepest prostration and the utterance of a blessing, as an expression of her inmost gratitude. The benedictory formula, "May the king live for ever," was only used by the Israelites on occasions of special importance; whereas the Babylonians and ancient Persians constantly addressed their kings in this way (cf. Dan. ii. 4, iii. 9, v. 10, vi. 22; Neh. ii. 3. *Aeliani var. hist.* i. 32, and *Curtius de gestis Alex.* vi. 5).

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[1] Kimchi says: "*Plures scribæ errant in hoc verbo, scribentes* ואתה *cum Aleph, quia sensui hoc conformius est; sed constat nobis ex correctis* MSS. *et masora, scribendum esse* ועתה *cum Ain.*" Hence both Norzi and Bruns have taken ועתה under their protection. Compare de Rossi, *variæ lectt. ad h. l.*

Vers. 32–40. David then sent for Zadok, Nathan, and Benaiah, and directed them to fetch the servants of their lord (אֲדֹנֵיכֶם, a *pluralis majestatis,* referring to David alone), and to conduct Solomon to Gihon riding upon the royal mule, and there to anoint him and solemnly proclaim him king. The servants of your lord (עַבְדֵי אֲדֹנֵיכֶם) are the *Crethi* and *Plethi,* and not the *Gibborim* also (Thenius), as ver. 38 clearly shows, where we find that these alone went down with him to Gihon as the royal body-guard. עַל־הַפִּרְדָּה אֲשֶׁר לִי, upon the mule which belongs to me, *i.e.* upon my (the king's) mule. When the king let any one ride upon the animal on which he generally rode himself, this was a sign that he was his successor upon the throne. Among the ancient Persians riding upon the king's horse was a public honour, which the king conferred upon persons of great merit in the eyes of all the people (cf. Esth. vi. 8, 9). פִּרְדָּה, the female mule, which in Kahira is still preferred to the male for riding (see Rosenmüller, *bibl. Althk.* iv. 2, p. 56). *Gihon* (גִּחוֹן) was the name given, according to 2 Chron. xxxii. 30 and xxxiii. 14, to a spring on the western side of Zion, which supplied two basins or pools, viz. the upper watercourse of Gihon (2 Chron. xxxii. 30) or upper pool (2 Kings xviii. 17; Isa. vii. 3, xxxvi. 2), and the lower pool (Isa. xxii. 9). The upper Gihon still exists as a large reservoir built up with hewn stones, though somewhat fallen to decay, which is called by the monks *Gihon,* by the natives *Birket el Mamilla,* about 700 yards W.N.W. from the Joppa gate, in the basin which opens into the valley of Hinnom. The lower pool is probably the present *Birket es Sultan,* on the south-western side of Zion (see Robinson, *Palestine,* i. p. 485 sqq., 512 sqq., and *Biblical Researches,* p. 142 sqq.). The valley between the two was certainly the place where Solomon was anointed, as it is not stated that this took place at the fountain of Gihon. And even the expression הוֹרַדְתֶּם אֹתוֹ עַל גִּחוֹן (take him down to Gihon) agrees with this. For if you go from Zion to Gihon towards the west, you first of all have to descend a slope, and then ascend by a gradual rise; and this slope was probably a more considerable one in ancient times (Rob. *Pal.* i. p. 514, note).[1]—Ver. 34. The blowing of the trumpet and the cry "Long live the king" (cf. 1 Sam. x. 24) were to serve as a solemn proclamation after the anointing had taken place.—Ver. 35. After the anointing they were to conduct Solomon up to Zion again; Solomon was then to ascend the throne, as David was about to appoint him prince over Israel and Judah in his own stead. Both the anointing and the appointment of Solomon as prince over the whole of the covenant nation were necessary, because the succession to the throne had been rendered doubtful through Adonijah's attempt, and the aged king was still alive. In cases where there was no question, and the son followed the father after his death, the unanimous opinion of the Rabbins is, that there was no anointing at all. Israel and Judah are mentioned, because David had been the first to unite all the tribes under his sceptre, and after the death of Solomon Israel fell away from the house of David.—Vers. 36, 37. Benaiah responded to the utterance of the royal will with a confirmatory "Amen, thus saith Jehovah the God of my lord the king;" *i.e.* may the word of the king become a word of Jehovah his God, who fulfils what He promises (Ps. xxxiii. 9); and added the pious wish, "May Jehovah be with Solomon, as He was with David, and glorify his throne above the throne of David,"—a wish which was not merely "flattery of his paternal vanity" (Thenius), but which had in view the prosperity of the monarchy, and was also fulfilled by God (cf. iii. 11 sqq.).—Vers. 38–40. The anointing of Solomon was carried out immediately, as the king had commanded. On the *Crethi* and *Plethi* see at 2 Sam. viii. 18. "The oil-horn out of the tent" (*i.e.* a vessel made of horn and containing oil) was no doubt one which held the holy anointing oil, with which the priests and the vessels of the sanctuary were anointed (see Ex. xxx. 22 sqq.). The tent (הָאֹהֶל), however, is not the tabernacle at Gibeon, but the tent set up by David for the ark of the covenant upon Mount Zion (2 Sam. vi. 17). For even though Zadok was appointed high priest at the tabernacle at Gibeon, and Abiathar, who held with Adonijah, at the ark of the covenant, the two high priests were not so unfriendly towards one another, that Zadok could not have obtained admission to the ark of the covenant in Abiathar's absence to fetch away the anointing oil.—Ver. 40. All the people, *i.e.* the crowd which was present at the anointing, went up after him, *i.e.* accompanied Solomon to the citadel of Zion, with flutes and loud acclamation, so that the earth nearly burst with their shouting. תִּבָּקַע, "to burst in pieces" (as in 2 Chron. xxv. 12), is a hyperbolical expression for quaking.

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[1] The conjecture of Thenius, that גִּחוֹן should be altered into גִּבְעוֹן, is hardly worth mentioning; for, apart from the fact that all the ancient versions confirm the corectness of גִּחוֹן, the objections which Thenius brings against it amount to mere conjectures or groundless assumptions, such as that Zadok took the oil-horn out of the tabernacle at Gibeon, which is not stated in ver. 39. Moreover, Gibeon was a three hours' journey from Jerusalem, so that it would have been absolutely impossible for the anointing, which was not commanded by David till after Adonijah's feast had commenced, to be finished so quickly that the procession could return to Jerusalem before it was ended, as is distinctly recorded in ver. 41.

Vers. 41–53. The noise of this shouting reached the ears of Adonijah and his guests, when the feast was just drawing to a close. The music, therefore, and the joyful acclamations of the people must have been heard as far off as the fountain of Rogel. When Joab observed the sound of the trumpet, knowing what these tones must signify, he asked "wherefore the sound of the city in an uproar" (*i. e.* what does it mean)? At that moment Jonathan the son of Abiathar arrived (see 2 Sam. xv. 27, xvii. 17 sqq.). Adonijah called out to him : "Come, for thou art a brave man and bringest good tidings;" suppressing all anxiety with these words, as he knew his father's will with regard to the succession to the throne, and the powerful and influential friends of Solomon (see vers. 5, 19, 26).—Vers. 43 sqq. Jonathan replied: אֲבָל, "yea but," corresponding to the Latin *imo vero*, an expression of assurance with a slight doubt, and then related that Solomon had been anointed king by David's command, and the city was in a joyous state of excitement in consequence (תֵּהֹם as in Ruth i. 19), and that he had even ascended the throne, that the servants of the king had blessed David for it, and that David himself had worshipped and praised Jehovah the God of Israel that he had lived to see his son ascend the throne. The repetition of וְגַם three times (vers. 46–48) gives emphasis to the words, since every new point which is introduced with וְגַם raises the thing higher and higher towards absolute certainty. The fact related in ver. 47 refers to the words of Benaiah in vers. 36 and 37. The *Chethib* אֱלֹהֶיךָ is the correct reading, and the *Keri* אֱלֹהִים an unnecessary emendation. The prayer to God, with thanksgiving for the favour granted to him, was offered by David after the return of his anointed son Solomon to the royal palace; so that it ought strictly to have been mentioned after ver. 40. The worship of the grey-headed David upon the bed recalls to mind the worship of the patriarch Jacob after making known his last will (Gen. xlvii. 31).—Vers. 49, 50. The news spread terror. All the guests of Adonijah fled, every man his way. Adonijah himself sought refuge from Solomon at the horns of the altar. The altar was regarded from time immemorial and among all nations as a place of refuge for criminals deserving of death; but, according to Ex. xxi. 14, in Israel it was only allowed to afford protection in cases of unintentional slaying, and for these special cities of refuge were afterwards provided (Num. xxxv.). In the horns of the altar, as symbols of power and strength, there was concentrated the true significance of the altar as a divine place, from which there emanated both life and health (see at Ex. xxvii. 19). By grasping the horns of the altar the culprit placed himself under the protection of the saving and helping grace of God, which wipes away sin, and thereby abolishes punishment (see Bähr, *Symbolik des Mos. Cult.* i. p. 474). The question to what altar Adonijah fled, whether to the altar at the ark of the covenant in Zion, or to the one at the tabernacle at Gibeon, or to the one built by David on the threshing-floor of Araunah, cannot be determined with certainty. It was probably to the first of these, however, as nothing is said about a flight to Gibeon, and with regard to the altar of Araunah it is not certain that it was provided with horns like the altars of the two sanctuaries.—Vers. 51, 52. When this was reported to Solomon, together with the prayer of Adonijah that the king would swear to him that he would not put him to death with the sword (אִם before יָמִית, a particle used in an oath), he promised him conditional impunity: "If he shall be brave (בֶּן־חַיִל, *vir probus*), none of his hair shall fall to the earth," equivalent to not a hair of his head shall be injured (cf. 1 Sam. xiv. 45); "but if evil be found in him," *i.e.* if he render himself guilty of a fresh crime, "he shall die."—Ver. 53. He then had him fetched down from the altar (הוֹרִיד, inasmuch as the altar stood upon an eminence); and when he fell down before the king, *i.e.* did homage to him as king, he gave him his life and freedom in the words, "Go to thy house." The expression לֵךְ לְבֵיתֶךָ does not imply his banishment from the court (compare ch. ii. 13 and 2 Sam. xiv. 24). Solomon did not wish to commence his own ascent of the throne by infliction of punishment, and therefore presented the usurper with his life on the condition that he kept himself quiet.

CHAP. II. DAVID'S LAST INSTRUCTIONS AND DEATH. SOLOMON ASCENDS THE THRONE AND FORTIFIES HIS GOVERNMENT.

The anointing of Solomon as king, which was effected by David's command (ch. i.), is only briefly mentioned in 1 Chron. xxiii. 1 in the words, "When David was old and full of days, he made his son Solomon king over Israel;" which serve as an introduction to the account of the arrangements made by David during the closing days of his life. After these arrangements have been described, there follow in 1 Chron. xxviii. and xxix. his last instructions and his death. The aged king gathered together the tribe-princes and the rest of the dignitaries and superior officers to a diet at Jerusalem, and having introduced Solomon to them as the successor chosen by God, exhorted them to keep the commandments of God, and urged upon Solomon and the whole assembly the building of the temple, gave his son the model of the temple and all the materials which he had collected towards its erection, called upon the great men of the kingdom to contribute to this work, which they willingly agreed to, and closed this last act of his reign with praise and thanksgiving to God and a great sacrificial festival, at which the assembled states of the realm made Solomon king a second time, and anointed him prince in the presence of Jehovah (1 Chron. xxix. 22).—A repetition of the anointing of the new king at the instigation of the states of the realm, accompanied by their solemn homage, had also taken place in the case of both Saul (1 Sam. xi.) and David (2 Sam. ii. 4 and v. 3), and appears to have been an essential requirement to secure the general recognition of the king on the part of the nation, at any rate in those cases in which the succession to the throne was not undisputed. In order, therefore, to preclude any rebellion after his death, David summoned this national assembly again after Solomon's first anointing and ascent of the throne, that the representatives of the whole nation might pay the requisite homage to king Solomon, who had been installed as his successor according to the will of God.—To this national assembly, which is only reported in the Chronicles, there are appended the last instructions which David gave, according to vers. 1–9 of our chapter, to his successor Solomon immediately before his death. Just as in the Chronicles, according to the peculiar plan of that work, there is no detailed description of the installation of David on the throne; so here the author of our books has omitted the account of this national diet, and the homage paid by the estates of the realm to the new king, as not being required by the purpose of his work, and has communicated the last personal admonitions and instructions of the dying king David instead.[1]

Vers. 1–11. David's Last Instructions and Death.—Vers. 1–4. When David saw that his life was drawing to a close, he first of all admonished his son Solomon to be valiant in the observance of the commandments of God. "I go the way of all the world" (as in Josh. xxiii. 14), *i.e.* the way of death; "be strong and be a man,"—not "bear my departure bravely," as Thenius supposes, but prove thyself brave (cf. 1 Sam. iv. 9) to keep the commandments of the Lord. Just as in 1 Sam iv. 9 the object in which the bravery is to show itself is appended simply by the copula *Vâv;* so is it here also with וְשָׁמַרְתָּ וגו'. The phrase שָׁמַר אֶת־מִשְׁמֶרֶת יי', to keep the keeping of Jehovah, which so frequently occurs in the *Thorah, i.e.* to observe or obey whatever is to be observed in relation to Jehovah (cf. Gen. xxvi. 5, Lev. viii. 35, xviii. 30, etc.), always receives its more precise definition from the context, and is used here, as in Gen. xxvi. 5, to denote obedience to the law of God in all its extent, or, according to the first definition, to walk in the ways of Jehovah. This is afterwards more fully expanded in the expression לִשְׁמֹר חֻקֹּתָיו וגו', to keep the ordinances, commandments, rights, and testimonies of Jehovah. These four words were applied to the different precepts of the law, the first three of which are connected together in Gen. xxvi. 5, Deut. v. 28, viii. 11, and served to individualize the rich and manifold substance of the demands of the Lord to His people as laid down in the *Thorah*. לְמַעַן תַּשְׂכִּיל, that thou mayest act wisely and execute well, as in Deut. xxix. 8, Josh. i. 7.—Ver. 4. Solomon would then experience still further this blessing of walking in the ways of the Lord, since the Lord would fulfil to him His promise of the everlasting possession of the throne. לְמַעַן יָקִים וגו' is grammatically subordinate to לְמַעַן תַּשְׂכִּיל in ver. 3. The word which Jehovah has spoken concerning David (דִּבֶּר עָלַי) is the promise in 2 Sam. vii. 12 sqq., the substance of which is quoted here by David with a negative turn, לֹא יִכָּרֵת וגו', and with express allusion to the condition on which God would assuredly fulfil His promise, viz. if the descendants of David preserve their ways, to walk before the Lord in truth. בֶּאֱמֶת is more precisely defined by בְּכָל . . . נַפְשָׁם. For the fact itself see Deut. v. 5, xi. 13, 18. The formula לֹא יִכָּרֵת וגו' is formed after 1 Sam. ii. 33 (compare also 2 Sam. iii. 29 and Josh. ix. 23). "There shall not be cut off to thee a man from upon the throne of Israel," *i.e.* there shall never be wanting to thee a descendant to take the throne; in other words, the sovereignty shall always remain in thy family. This promise, which reads thus in 2 Sam. vii. 16, "Thy house and thy kingdom shall be continual for ever before thee, and thy throne stand fast for ever," and which was confirmed to Solomon by the Lord Himself after his prayer at the consecration of the temple (ch. viii. 25, ix. 5), is not to be understood as implying that no king of the Davidic house would be thrust away from the throne, but simply affirms that the posterity of David was not to be cut off, so as to leave no offshoot which could take possession of the throne. Its ultimate fulfilment it received in Christ (see at 2 Sam. vii. 12 sqq.). The second לֵאמֹר in ver. 4 is not to be erased as suspicious, as being merely a repetition of the first in consequence of the long conditional clause, even though it is wanting in the Vulgate, the Arabic, and a Hebrew codex.

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[1] To refute the assertion of De Wette, Gramberg, and Thenius, that this account of the Chronicles arises from a free mode of dealing with the history, and an intention to suppress everything that did not contribute to the honour of David and his house,—an assertion which can only be attributed to their completely overlooking, not to say studiously ignoring, the different plans of the two works (the books of Kings on the one hand, and those of Chronicles on the other),—it will be sufficient to quote the unprejudiced and thoughtful decision of Bertheau, who says, in his Comm. on 1 Chron. xxiii. 1: "These few words (1 Chron. xxiii. 1) give in a condensed form the substance of the account in 1 Kings i., which is intimately bound up with the account of the family affairs of David in the books of Samuel and Kings, and therefore, according to the whole plan of our historical work, would have been out of place in the Chronicles."

After a general admonition David communicated to his successor a few more special instructions; viz., first of all (vers. 5, 6), to punish *Joab* for his wickedness. "What Joab did to me:"—of this David mentions only the two principal crimes of Joab, by which he had already twice deserved death, namely, his killing the two generals, Abner (2 Sam. iii. 27) and Amasa the son of Jether (2 Sam. xx. 10). The name יֶתֶר is written יִתְרָא in 2 Sam. xvii. 25. Joab had murdered both of them out of jealousy in a treacherous and malicious manner; and thereby he had not only grievously displeased David and bidden defiance to his royal authority, but by the murder of Abner had exposed the king to the suspicion in the eyes of the people of having instigated the crime (see at 2 Sam. iii. 28, 37). וַיָּשֶׂם דְּמֵי מ׳, "and he made war-blood in peace," *i.e.* he shed in the time of peace blood that ought only to flow in war (שׂים in the sense of making, as in Deut. xiv. 1, Ex. x. 2, etc.), "and brought war-blood upon his girdle which was about his loins, and upon his shoes under his feet," *sc.* in the time of peace. This was the crime therefore: that Joab had murdered the two generals in a time of peace, as one ought only to slay his opponent in time of war. *Girdle and shoes*, the principal features in oriental attire when a man is preparing himself for any business, were covered with blood, since Joab, while saluting them, had treacherously stabbed both of them with the sword. David ought to have punished these two crimes; but when Abner was murdered, he felt himself too weak to visit a man like Joab with the punishment he deserved, as he had only just been anointed king, and consequently he did nothing more than invoke divine retribution upon his head (2 Sam. iii. 29). And when Amasa was slain, the rebellions of Absalom and Sheba had crippled the power of David too much, for him to visit the deed with the punishment that was due. But as king of the nation of God, it was not right for him to allow such crimes to pass unpunished: he therefore transferred the punishment, for which he had wanted the requisite power, to his son and successor.—Ver. 6. "Do according to thy wisdom ("mark the proper opportunity of punishing him"—Seb. Schmidt), and let not his grey hair go down into hell (the region of the dead) in peace (*i.e.* unpunished)." The punishment of so powerful a man as Joab the commander-in-chief was, required great wisdom, to avoid occasioning a rebellion in the army, which was devoted to him.—Ver. 7. If the demands of justice required that Joab should be punished, the duty of gratitude was no less holy to the dying king. And Solomon was to show this to the sons of *Barzillai* the Gileadite, and make them companions of his table; because Barzillai had supplied David with provisions on his flight from Absalom (2 Sam. xvii. 27 sqq., xix. 32 sqq.). וְהָיוּ בְּאֹכְלֵי שֻׁלְחָנֶךָ, "let them be among those eating of thy table;" *i.e.* not, "let them draw their food from the royal table,"—for there was no particular distinction in this, as all the royal attendants at the court received their food from the royal kitchen, as an equivalent for the pay that was owing,—but, "let them join in the meals at the royal table." The fact that in 2 Sam. ix. 10, 11, 13, we have אָכַל עַל־שֻׁלְחָן to express this, makes no material difference. According to 2 Sam. xix. 38, Barzillai had, it is true, allowed only one son to follow the king to his court. "For so they drew near to me," *i.e.* they showed the kindness to me of supplying me with food; compare 2 Sam. xvii. 27, where Barzillai alone is named, though, as he was a man of eighty years old, he was certainly supported by his sons.—Ver. 8. On the other hand, *Shimei* the Benjamite had shown great hostility to David (cf. 2 Sam. xvi. 5–8). He had cursed him with a vehement curse as he fled from Absalom (נִמְרֶצֶת, vehement, violent, not ill, *heillos*, from the primary meaning to be sick or ill, as Thenius supposes, since it cannot be shown that מָרַץ has any such meaning); and when David returned to Jerusalem and Shimei fell at his feet, he had promised to spare his life, because he did not want to mar the joy at his reinstatement in his kingdom by an act of punishment (2 Sam. xix. 19–24), and therefore had personally forgiven him. But the insult which Shimei had offered in his person to the anointed of the Lord, as king and representative of the rights of God, he could not forgive. The instruction given to his successor (אַל־תְּנַקֵּהוּ, let him not be guiltless) did not spring from personal revenge, but was the duty of the king as judge and administrator of the divine right.[1] It follows from the expression עִמְּךָ, with thee, *i.e.* in thy neighbourhood, that Shimei was living at that time in Jerusalem (cf. ver. 36).—Vers. 10, 11. After these instructions David died, and was buried in the city of David, *i.e.* upon Mount Zion, where the sepulchre of David still existed in the time of Christ (Acts ii. 29).[1] On the length of his reign see 2 Sam. v. 5.

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[1] "Shimei is and remains rather a proof of David's magnanimity than of vengeance. It was not a little thing to tolerate the miscreant in his immediate neighbourhood for his whole life long (not even banishment being thought of). And if under the following reign also he had been allowed to end his days in peace (which had never been promised him), this would have been a kindness which would have furnished an example of unpunished crimes that might easily have been abused." This is the verdict of J. J. Hess in his *Geschichte Davids*, ii. p. 221.

Vers. 12–46. ACCESSION OF SOLOMON AND ESTABLISHMENT OF HIS GOVERNMENT.—Ver. 12 is a heading embracing the substance of what follows, and is more fully expanded in 1 Chron. xxix. 23–25. Solomon established his monarchy first of all by punishing the rebels, Adonijah (vers. 13–25) and his adherents (vers. 26–35), and by carrying out the final instructions of his father (vers. 36–46).

Vers. 13–25. *Adonijah forfeits his life.*—Vers. 13–18. Adonijah came to Bathsheba with the request that she would apply to king Solomon to give him Abishag of Shunem as his wife. Bathsheba asked him, "Is peace thy coming?" *i.e.* comest thou with a peaceable intention? (as in 1 Sam. xvi. 4), because after what had occurred (ch. i. 5 sqq.) she suspected an evil intention. He introduced his petition with these words: "Thou knowest that the kingdom was mine, and all Israel had set its face upon me that I should be king, then the kingdom turned about and became my brother's; for it became his from the Lord." The throne was his, not because he had usurped it, but because it belonged to him as the eldest son at that time, according to the right of primogeniture. Moreover it might have been the case that many of the people wished him to be king, and the fact that he had found adherents in Joab, Abiathar, and others, confirms this; but his assertion, that all Israel had set its eyes upon him as the future king, went beyond the bounds of truth. At the same time, he knew how to cover over the dangerous sentiment implied in his words in a very skilful manner by adding the further remark, that the transfer of the kingdom to his brother had come from Jehovah; so that Bathsheba did not detect the artifice, and promised to fulfil his request (vers. 16 sqq.) to intercede with king Solomon for Abishag to be given him to wife. אַל־תָּשִׁבִי אֶת־פָּנָי, "do not turn back my face," *i. e.* do not refuse my request.—Ver. 19. When Bathsheba came to Solomon, he received her with the reverence due to the queen-mother: "*he rose up to meet her*" (a pregnant expression for "he rose up and went to meet her"), made a low bow, then sat upon his throne again, and bade her sit upon a throne at his right hand. The seat at the right hand of the king was the place of honour among the Israelites (cf. Ps. cx. 1), also with the ancient Arabian kings (cf. Eichhorn, *Monumenta Antiq. Hist. Arab.* p. 220), as well as among the Greeks and Romans.—Vers. 20 sqq. To her request, "Let Abishag of Shunem be given to Adonijah thy brother for a wife" (יֻתַּן אֶת, cf. Ges. § 143, 1, *a*), which she regarded in her womanly simplicity as a very small one (קְטַנָּה), he replied with indignation, detecting at once the intrigues of Adonijah: "And why dost thou ask Abishag of Shunem for Adonijah? ask for him the kingdom, for he is my elder brother; and indeed for him, and for Abiathar the priest, and for Joab the son of Zeruiah." The repetition of לוֹ in וְלוֹ (ver. 22), for the purpose of linking on another clause, answers entirely to the emotional character of the words. "For him, and for Abiathar and Joab:" Solomon said this, because these two men of high rank had supported Adonijah's rebellion and wished to rule under his name. There is no ground for any such alterations of the text as Thenius proposes.—Although Abishag had been only David's nurse, in the eyes of the people she passed as his concubine; and among the Israelites, just as with the ancient Persians (Herod. iii. 68), taking possession of the harem of a deceased king was equivalent to an establishment of the claim to the throne (see at 2 Sam. xii. 8 and iii. 7, 8). According to 2 Sam. xvi. 21, this cannot have been unknown even to Bathsheba; but as Adonijah's wily words had disarmed all suspicion, she may not have thought of this, or may perhaps have thought that Abishag was not to be reckoned as one of David's concubines, because David had not known her (ch. i. 4).—Vers. 23 sqq. Solomon thereupon solemnly swore (the formula of an oath, and the כִּי introducing the oath, as in 1 Sam. xiv. 44, etc.), "Adonijah has spoken this word against his own life." בְּנַפְשׁוֹ, at the cost of his life, as in 2 Sam. xxiii. 17, *i.e.* at the hazard of his life, or to his destruction. Ver. 24. "And now, as truly as Jehovah liveth, who hath established me and set me on the throne of my father David, and hath made me a house, as He said (*verbatim*, 2 Sam. vii. 11): yea, to-day shall Adonijah be put to death." Jehovah established Solomon, or founded him firmly, by raising him to the throne in spite of Adonijah's usurpation. In ויושׁיביני the central י has got into the text through a copyist's error. עָשָׂה לִי בַּיִת, *i.e.* He has bestowed upon me a family or posterity. Solomon had already one son, viz. Rehoboam, about a year old (compare xi. 42 with ch. xiv. 21 and 2 Chron. xii. 13).[1]—Ver. 25. Solomon had this sentence immediately executed upon Adonijah by Benaiah, the chief of the body-guard, according to the oriental custom of both ancient and modern times. The king was perfectly just in doing this. For since Adonijah, even after his first attempt to seize upon the throne had been forgiven by Solomon, endeavoured to secure his end by fresh machinations, duty to God, who had exalted Solomon to the throne, demanded that the rebel should be punished with all the severity of the law, without regard to blood-relationship.

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[1] The situation of the tombs of the kings of Judah upon Zion, Thenius has attempted to trace minutely in a separate article in Illgen's *Zeitschrift für die histor. Theol.* 1844, i. p. 1 sqq., and more especially to show that the entrance to these tombs must have been on the eastern slope of Mount Zion, which falls into the valley of *Tyropœon*, and obliquely opposite to the spring of Siloah. This is in harmony with the statement of Theodoret (*quæst.* 6 in iii. Reg.), to the effect that Josephus says, τὸ δὲ μνῆμα (τῆς ταφῆς) παρὰ τὴν Σιλοάμ· εἶναι ἀντροειδὲς ἔχον τὸ σχῆμα, καὶ τὴν βασιλικὴν δηλοῦν πολυτέλειαν; although this statement does not occur in any passage of his works as they have come down to us.

Vers. 26, 27. *Deposition of Abiathar.*—The conduct of Solomon towards the high priest Abiathar is a proof how free his actions were from personal revenge or too great severity. Abiathar had also forfeited his life through the part he took in Adonijah's conspiracy; but Solomon simply sent him to Anathoth (*i.e.* Anata; see at Josh. xviii. 24), to his own fields, *i.e.* to his property there, telling him, "Thou art indeed a man of death," *i.e.* thou hast deserved to die, "but I will not put thee to death to-day, because thou hast borne the ark of Jehovah," namely, both on the occasion of its solemn conveyance to Jerusalem (1 Chron. xv. 11 sqq.) and also on David's flight from Absalom (2 Sam. xv. 24, 29), that is to say, because of his high-priestly dignity, and because thou didst endure all that my father endured, *i.e.* thou didst share all his afflictions and sufferings, both in the period of Saul's persecution (1 Sam. xxii. 20 sqq., xxiii. 8 sqq.), and during the rebellion of Absalom (2 Sam. xv. 24 sqq.). בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא (to-day) puts a limit upon the pardon, because Solomon could not foresee whether Abiathar would always keep quiet, and not forfeit his life again by fresh crimes.[1]—Ver. 27. The banishment of Abiathar to his own private possession involved his deposition from the priesthood. And, as the historian adds, thus was the word of the Lord concerning the house of Eli fulfilled (1 Sam. ii. 30–33). לְמַלֵּא corresponds to the New Testament ἵνα πληρωθῇ. For further remarks on this prophecy and its fulfilment, see at 1 Sam. ii. 30 sqq.[2] Thus was the high-priesthood of the house of Eli extinguished, and henceforth this dignity passed through Zadok into the sole possession of the line of Eleazar.

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[1] When Thenius denies this, and maintains that Rehoboam cannot have been 41 years old when he began to reign, referring to his discussion at ch. xiv. 21, he answers himself, inasmuch as at ch. xiv. 21 he demonstrates the fallacy of the objections which Cappellus has raised against the correctness of the reading "41 years."

Vers. 28–34. *Execution of Joab.*—When the report (of the execution of Adonijah and the deposition of Abiathar) came to Joab, he fled to the tent of Jehovah (not to the tabernacle, but to the holy tent upon Zion) to seek protection at the altar (see at ch. i. 50). The words כִּי יוֹאָב . . . לֹא נָטָה are introduced as a parenthesis to explain Joab's flight: "for Joab had leaned after Adonijah," *i.e.* taken his side (נָטָה אַחֲרֵי, as in Ex. xxiii. 2, Judg. ix. 3), "but not after Absalom."[3] There is no foundation in the biblical text for the conjecture, that Joab had given Adonijah the advice to ask for Abishag as his wife, just as Ahithophel had given similar advice to Absalom (2 Sam. xvi. 21). For not only is there no intimation of anything of the kind, but Solomon punished Joab solely because of his crimes in the case of Abner and Amasa. Moreover, Abiathar was also deposed, without having any fresh machinations in favour of Adonijah laid to his charge. The punishment of Adonijah and Abiathar was quite sufficient to warn Joab of his approaching fate, and lead him to seek to save his life by fleeing to the altar. It is true that, according to Ex. xxi. 13, 14, the altar could afford no protection to a man who had committed two murders. But he probably thought no more of these crimes, which had been committed a long time before, but simply of his participation in Adonijah's usurpation; and he might very well hope that religious awe would keep Solomon from putting him to death in a holy place for such a crime as that. And it is very evident that this hope was not altogether a visionary one, from the fact that, according to ver. 30, when Joab refused to leave the altar at the summons addressed to him in the name of the king, Benaiah did not give him the death-blow at once, but informed Solomon of the fact and received his further commands. Solomon, however, did not arrest the course of justice, but ordered him to be put to death there and afterwards buried. The burial of the persons executed was a matter of course, as, according to Deut. xxi. 23, even a person who had been hanged was to be buried before sunset. When, therefore, Solomon gives special orders for the burial of Joab, the meaning is that Benaiah is to provide for the burial with distinct reference to the services which Joab had rendered to his father. "And take away the blood, which Joab shed without cause, from me and my father's house." So long as Joab remained unpunished for the double murder, the blood-guiltiness rested upon the king and his house, on whom the duty of punishment devolved (cf. Num. xxxv. 30, 31; Deut. xix. 13). דְּמֵי חִנָּם, blood without cause, *i.e.* blood shed in innocence. On the connection of the adverb with the substantive, at which Thenius takes offence, comp. Ges. § 151, 1, and Ewald, § 287, *d.*

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[1] There is no meaning in the objection of Thenius, that Abiathar did not carry the ark himself, since this was not the duty of the high priest. For, in the first place, it is questionable whether Abiathar did not lend a helping hand at the removal of the ark during Absalom's conspiracy. And, secondly, the duty binding upon the high priest, to superintend and conduct the removal of the ark, might very well be called carrying the ark. The conjecture, that for אָרֹן we should read אֵפוֹד, founders on the preterite נָשָׂאתָ; for Abiathar had not only worn the ephod once before, but he wore it till the very hour in which Solomon deposed him from his office.

[2] Nothing is related concerning the subsequent fate of Abiathar, since the death of a high priest who had been deprived of his office was a matter of no importance to the history of the kingdom of God. At any rate, he would not survive his deposition very long, as he was certainly eighty years old already (see *Comm. on Sam.* p. 267).—The inference which Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. pp. 269, 270) draws from 1 Sam. ii. 31–36 as to the manner of his death, namely, that he fell by the sword, is one of the numerous fictions founded upon naturalistic assumptions with which this scholar has ornamented the biblical history.

[3] Instead of אַבְשָׁלוֹם the LXX. (Cod. Vat.), Vulgate, Syr., and Arab. have adopted the reading שְׁלֹמֹה, and both Thenius and Ewald propose to alter the text accordingly. But whatever plausibility this reading may have, especially if we alter the preterite נָטָה into the participle נֹטֶה after the ἦν κεκλικώς of the LXX., as Thenius does, it has no other foundation than an arbitrary rendering of the LXX., who thought, but quite erroneously, that the allusion to Absalom was inapplicable here. For נָטָה אַחַר, to take a

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person's side, would suit very well in the case of Adonijah and Absalom, but not in that of Solomon, whose claim to the throne was not a party affair, but had been previously determined by God.

—For ver. 32, compare ver. 5. The words of Solomon in ver. 33*a* point back to the curse which David uttered upon Joab and his descendants after the murder of Abner (2 Sam. iii. 28, 29). "But to David, and his seed, and his house, and his throne, let there be salvation for ever from Jehovah." This wish sprang from a conviction, based upon 2 Sam. vii. 14, that the Lord would not fulfil His promise to David unless his successors upon the throne exercised right and justice according to the command of the Lord.—Ver. 34. Benaiah went up (וַיַּעַל), inasmuch as the altar by the ark of the covenant stood higher up Mount Zion than Solomon's house. Joab was buried "in his house" (*i.e.* in the tomb prepared in his house, either in the court or in the garden: cf. 1 Sam. xxv. 1), "in the desert," probably the wilderness of Judah, as Joab's mother was a step-sister of David, and therefore probably dwelt in the neighbourhood of Bethlehem.—Ver. 35. Solomon appointed Benaiah commander-in-chief in the place of Joab, and put Zadok in Abiathar's place (cf. ch. i. 8, 9).

Vers. 36–46. *Punishment of Shimei.*—Solomon thereupon ordered Shimei to come, probably from Bahurim, where his home was (2 Sam. xvi. 5), and commanded him to build himself a house in Jerusalem to dwell in, and not to leave the city "any whither" (אָנָה וָאָנָה), threatening him with death if ever he should cross the brook Kidron. The valley of Kidron is mentioned as the eastern boundary of the city with an allusion to the fact, that Bahurim was to the east of Jerusalem towards the desert.—Ver. 38. Shimei vowed obedience, and that on oath, as is supplementarily observed in ver. 42, though it has been arbitrarily interpolated by the LXX. here; and he kept his word a considerable time.—Vers. 39, 40. But after the lapse of three years, when two slaves fled to Gath to king Achish, with whom David had also sought and found refuge (1 Sam. xxvii. 2, compare ch. xxi. 11 sqq.), he started for Gath as soon as he knew this, and fetched them back.—Vers. 41 sqq. When this was reported to Solomon, he sent for Shimei and charged him with the breach of his command: "Did I not swear to thee by Jehovah, and testify to thee, etc.? Why hast thou not kept the oath of Jehovah (the oath sworn by Jehovah) . .?"—Ver. 44. He then reminded him of the evil which he had done to his father: "Thou knowest all the evil, which thy heart knoweth (*i.e.* which thy conscience must tell thee); and now Jehovah returns the evil upon thy head," namely, by decreeing the punishment of death, which he deserved for blaspheming the anointed of the Lord (2 Sam. xvi. 9).—Ver. 45. "And king Solomon will be blessed, and the throne of David be established before Jehovah for ever," namely, because the king does justice (compare the remark on ver. 33).—Ver. 46. Solomon then ordered him to be executed by Benaiah. This punishment was also just. As Solomon had put Shimei's life in his own hand by imposing upon him confinement in Jerusalem, and Shimei had promised on oath to obey the king's command, the breach of his oath was a crime for which he had no excuse. There is no force at all in the excuses which some commentators adduce in his favour, founded upon the money which his slaves had cost him, and the wish to recover possession of them, which was a right one in itself. If Shimei had wished to remain faithful to his oath, he might have informed the king of the flight of his slaves, have entreated the king that they might be brought back, and have awaited the king's decision; but he had no right thus lightly to break the promise given on oath. By the breach of his oath he had forfeited his life. And this is the first thing with which Solomon charges him, without his being able to offer any excuse; and it is not till afterwards that he adduces as a second fact in confirmation of the justice of his procedure, the wickedness that he practised towards his father.—The last clause, "and the kingdom was established by (בְּיַד) Solomon," is attached to the following chapter in the Cod. Al. of the LXX. (in the Cod. Vat. it is wanting, or rather its place is supplied by a long interpolation), in the Vulgate, and in the Syriac; and indeed rightly so, as Thenius has shown, not merely because of the רַק in ch. iii. 2, but also because of its form as a circumstantial clause, to which the following account (ch. iii. 1 sqq.) is appended.

CHAP. III. SOLOMON'S MARRIAGE; WORSHIP AND SACRIFICE AT GIBEON; AND WISE JUDICIAL SENTENCE.

The establishment of the government in the hands of Solomon having been noticed in ch. ii., the history of his reign commences with an account of his marriage to an Egyptian princess, and with a remark concerning the state of the kingdom at the beginning of his reign (vers. 1-3). There then follows a description of the solemn sacrifice and prayer at Gibeon, by which Solomon sought to give a religious consecration to his government, and to secure the assistance of the Lord and His blessing upon it, and obtained the fulfilment of his desire (vers. 4–15). And then, as a practical proof of the spirit of his government, we have the sentence through which he displayed the wisdom of his judicial decisions in the sight of all the people (vers. 16–28).

Vers. 1–3. *Solomon's marriage and the religious state of the kingdom.*—Ver. 1. When Solomon had well secured his possession of the throne (ch. ii. 46), he entered into alliance with Pharaoh, by taking his daughter as his wife. This Pharaoh of Egypt is supposed by Winer, Ewald, and others to have been *Psusennes,* the last king of the twenty-first (Tanitic) dynasty, who reigned thirty-five years; since the first king of the twenty-second (Bubastic) dynasty, *Sesonchis* or *Sheshonk,* was certainly the Shishak who conquered Jerusalem in the fifth year of Rehoboam's reign (ch. xiv. 25, 26). The alliance by marriage with the royal family of Egypt presupposes that Egypt was desirous of cultivating friendly relations with the kingdom of Israel, which had grown into a power to be dreaded; although, as we know nothing more of the history of Egypt at that time than the mere names of the kings (as given by Manetho), it is impossible to determine what may have been the more precise grounds which led the reigning king of Egypt to seek the friendship of Israel. There is, at any rate, greater probability in this supposition than in that of Thenius, who conjectures that Solomon contracted this marriage because he saw the necessity of entering into a closer relationship with this powerful neighbour, who had a perfectly free access to Palestine. The conclusion of this marriage took place in the first year of Solomon's reign, though probably not at the very beginning of the reign, but not till after his buildings had been begun, as we may infer from the expression עַד כַּלֹּתוֹ לִבְנוֹת (until he had made an end of building). Moreover, Solomon had already married Naamah the Ammonitess before ascending the throne, and had had a son by her (compare ch. xiv. 21 with xi. 42, 43).—Marriage with an Egyptian princess was not a transgression of the law, as it was only marriages with Canaanitish women that were expressly prohibited (Ex. xxxiv. 16; Deut. vii. 3), whereas it was allowable to marry even foreign women taken in war (Deut. xxi. 10

sqq.). At the same time, it was only when the foreign wives renounced idolatry and confessed their faith in Jehovah, that such marriages were in accordance with the spirit of the law. And we may assume that this was the case even with Pharaoh's daughter; because Solomon adhered so faithfully to the Lord during the first years of his reign, that he would not have tolerated any idolatry in his neighbourhood, and we cannot find any trace of Egyptian idolatry in Israel in the time of Solomon, and, lastly, the daughter of Pharaoh is expressly distinguished in ch. xi. 1 from the foreign wives who tempted Solomon to idolatry in his old age. The assertion of Seb. Schmidt and Thenius to the contrary rests upon a false interpretation of ch. xi. 1.—"And he brought her into the city of David, till he had finished the building of his palace," etc. Into the city of David: *i.e.* not into the palace in which his father had dwelt, as Thenius arbitrarily interprets it in opposition to 2 Chron. viii. 11, but into a house in the city of David or Jerusalem, from which he brought her up into the house appointed for her after the building of his own palace was finished (ch. ix. 24). The building of the house of Jehovah is mentioned as well, because the sacred tent for the ark of the covenant was set up in the palace of David until the temple was finished, and the temple was not consecrated till after the completion of the building of the palace (see at ch. viii. 1). By the building of "the wall of Jerusalem" we are to understand a stronger fortification, and possibly also the extension of the city wall (see at ch. xi. 27).—Ver. 2. "*Only the people sacrificed upon high places, because there was not yet a house built for the name of Jehovah until those days.*" The limiting רַק, *only*, by which this general account of the existing condition of the religious worship is appended to what precedes, may be accounted for from the antithesis to the strengthening of the kingdom by Solomon mentioned in ch. ii. 46. The train of thought is the following: It is true that Solomon's authority was firmly established by the punishment of the rebels, so that he was able to ally himself by marriage with the king of Egypt; but just as he was obliged to bring his Egyptian wife into the city of David, because the building of his palace was not yet finished, so the people, and (according to ver. 3) even Solomon himself, were only able to sacrifice to the Lord at that time upon altars on the high places, because the temple was not yet built. The participle מְזַבְּחִים denotes the continuation of this religious condition (see Ewald, § 168, *c*). The בָּמוֹת, or high places,[1] were places of sacrifice and prayer, which were built upon eminences or hills, because men thought they were nearer the Deity there, and which consisted in some cases probably of an altar only, though as a rule there was an altar with a sanctuary built by the side (בֵּית בָּמוֹת, ch. xiii. 32; 2 Kings xvii. 29, 32, xxiii. 19), so that בָּמָה frequently stands for בֵּית בָּמָה (*e.g.* ch. xi. 7, xiv. 23; 2 Kings xxi. 3, xxiii. 8), and the בָּמָה is also distinguished from the מִזְבֵּחַ (2 Kings xxiii. 15; 2 Chron. xiv. 2). These *high places* were consecrated to the worship of Jehovah, and essentially different from the high places of the Canaanites which were consecrated to Baal. Nevertheless sacrificing upon these high places was opposed to the law, according to which the place which the Lord Himself had chosen for the revelation of His name was the only place where sacrifices were to be offered (Lev. xvii. 3 sqq.); and therefore it is excused here on the ground that no house (temple) had yet been built to the name of the Lord.—Ver. 3. Even Solomon, although he loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of his father David, *i.e.* according to ch. ii. 3, in the commandments of the Lord as they are written in the law of Moses, sacrificed and burnt incense upon high places. Before the building of the temple, more especially since the tabernacle had lost its significance as the central place of the gracious presence of God among His people, through the removal of the ark of the covenant, the worship of the high places was unavoidable; although even afterwards it still continued as a forbidden *cultus*, and could not be thoroughly exterminated even by the most righteous kings (ch. xxii. 24; 2 Kings xii. 4, xiv. 4, xv. 4, 35).

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[1] The opinion of Böttcher and Thenius, that בָּמָה signifies a "sacred coppice," is only based upon untenable etymological combinations, and cannot be proved. And Ewald's view is equally unfounded, viz. that "high places were an old Cananæan species of sanctuary, which at that time had become common in Israel also, and consisted of a tall stone of a conical shape, as the symbol of the Holy One, and of the real high place, viz. an altar, a sacred tree or grove, or even an image of the one God as well" (*Gesch.* iii. p. 390). For, on the one hand, it cannot be shown that the tall stone of a conical shape existed even in the case of the Canaanitish *bamoth*, and, on the other hand, it is impossible to adduce a shadow of a proof that the Israelitish *bamoth*, which were dedicated to Jehovah, were constructed precisely after the pattern of the Baal's-*bamoth* of the Canaanites.

Vers. 4–15. SOLOMON'S SACRIFICE AND DREAM AT GIBEON (cf. 2 Chron. i. 1–13).—To implore the divine blessing upon his reign, Solomon offered to the Lord at Gibeon a great sacrifice—a thousand burnt-offerings; and, according to 2 Chron. i. 2, the representatives of the whole nation took part in this sacrificial festival. At that time the great or principal *bamah* was at Gibeon (the present *el Jib;* see at Josh. ix. 3), namely, the Mosaic tabernacle (2 Chron. i. 3), which is called הַבָּמָה, because the ark of the covenant, with which Jehovah had bound up His gracious presence, was not there now. "Upon that altar," *i.e.* upon the altar of the great *bamah* at Gibeon, the brazen altar of burnt-offering in the tabernacle (2 Chron. i. 6).—Vers. 5 sqq. The one thing wanting in the place of sacrifice at Gibeon, viz. the ark of the covenant with the gracious presence of Jehovah, was supplied by the Lord in the case of this sacrifice by a direct revelation in a dream, which Solomon received in the night following the sacrifice. There is a connection between the question which God addressed to Solomon in the dream, "What shall I give thee?" and the object of the sacrifice, viz. to seek the help of God for his reign. Solomon commences his prayer in ver. 6 with an acknowledgment of the great favour which the Lord had shown to his father David, and had continued till now by raising his son to his throne (כַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה, as it is this day: cf. 1 Sam. xxii. 8, Deut. viii. 18, etc.); and then, in vers. 7–9, in the consciousness of his incapacity for the right administration of government over so numerous a people, he asks the Lord for an obedient heart and for wisdom to rule His people. וְעַתָּה introduces the petition, the reasons assigned for which are, (1) his youth and inexperience, and (2) the greatness or multitude of the nation to be governed. I am, says he, נַעַר קָטֹן, *i.e.* an inexperienced youth (Solomon was only about twenty years old); "I know not to go out and in," *i.e.* how to behave myself as king, or govern the people (for צֵאת וָבֹא compare the note on Num. xxvii. 17). At ver. 8 he describes the magnitude of the nation in words which recall to mind the divine promises in Gen. xiii. 16 and xxxii. 13, to indicate how gloriously the Lord has fulfilled the promises which He made to the patriarchs. —Ver. 9. וְנָתַתָּ, therefore give. The prayer (commencing with וְעַתָּה in ver. 7) is appended in the form of an apodosis to the circumstantial clauses וְאָנֹכִי וגו׳ and וְעַבְדְּךָ וגו׳, which contain the grounds of the petition. לֵב שֹׁמֵעַ, a hearing heart, *i.e.* a heart giving heed to the law and right of God, "to judge Thy people, (namely) to distinguish between good and evil (*i.e.* right and wrong)." "For who could judge this Thy numerous people," *sc.* unless Thou gavest him intelligence? כָּבֵד, *heavy* in multitude: in the Chronicles this is explained by גָּדוֹל.—Vers. 10 sqq. This prayer pleased God well. "Because thou hast asked this, and hast not asked for thyself long life, nor riches, nor the life (*i.e.* the destruction) of thy foes," all of them good things, which the world seeks to obtain as the greatest prize, "but intelligence to hear judgment (*i.e.* to foster it, inasmuch as the administration of justice rests upon a conscientious hearing of the parties), behold I have done according to thy word" (*i.e.* fulfilled thy request: the perfect is used, inasmuch as the hearkening has already begun; for הִנֵּה in this connection compare Ewald, § 307, *c*), "and given thee a wise and understanding heart." The words which follow, "so that there has been none like thee before thee," etc., are not to be restricted to the kings of Israel, as Clericus supposes, but are to be understood quite universally as applying to all mankind (cf. ch. v. 9–11).—Vers. 13, 14. In addition to this, according to the promise that to him who seeks first the kingdom of God and His righteousness all other things shall be added (Matt. vi. 33), God will also give him the earthly blessings, for which he has not asked, and that in great abundance, viz. riches and honour such as no king of the earth has had before him; and if he adhere faithfully to God's commandments, long life also (וְהַאֲרַכְתִּי, in this case I have lengthened). This last promise was not fulfilled, because Solomon did not observe the condition (cf. ch. xi. 42).—Ver. 15. Then Solomon awoke, and behold it was a dream; *i.e.* a dream produced by God, a revelation by dream, or a divine appearance in a dream. חֲלוֹם as in Num. xii. 6.—Solomon thanked the Lord again for this promise after his return to Jerusalem, by offering burnt-offerings and thank-offerings before the ark of the covenant, *i.e.* upon the altar at the tent erected for the ark upon Zion, and prepared a meal for all his servants (viz. his court-servants), *i.e.* a sacrificial meal of the שְׁלָמִים.—This sacrificial festival upon Zion is omitted in the Chronicles, as well as the following account in vers. 16–28; not, however, because in the chronicler's opinion no sacrifices had any legal validity but such as were offered upon the altar of the Mosaic tabernacle, as Thenius fancies, though without observing the account in 1 Chron. xxi.

26 sqq., which overthrows this assertion, but because this sacrificial festival had no essential significance in relation to Solomon's reign.

Vers. 16–28. SOLOMON'S JUDICIAL WISDOM.—As a proof that the Lord had bestowed upon Solomon unusual judicial wisdom, there is appended a decision of his in a very difficult case, in which Solomon had shown extraordinary intelligence. Two harlots living together in one house had each given birth to a child, and one of them had "overlaid" her child in the night while asleep (אֲשֶׁר שָׁכְבָה עָלָיו, because she had lain upon it), and had then placed her dead child in the other one's bosom and taken her living child away. When the other woman looked the next morning at the child lying in her bosom, she saw that it was not her own but the other woman's child, whereas the latter maintained the opposite. As they eventually referred the matter in dispute to the king, and each one declared that the living child was her own, the king ordered a sword to be brought, and the living child to be cut in two, and a half given to each. Then the mother of the living child, "because her bowels yearned upon her son," *i.e.* her maternal love was excited, cried out, "Give her (the other) the living child, but do not slay it;" whereas the latter said, "It shall be neither mine nor thine, cut it in pieces."—Ver. 27. Solomon saw from this which was the mother of the living child, and handed it over to her.[1]—Ver. 28. This judicial decision convinced all the people that Solomon was endowed with divine wisdom for the administration of justice.

CHAP. IV.-V. 14. SOLOMON'S MINISTERS OF STATE. HIS REGAL SPLENDOUR AND WISDOM.

Ch. iv. contains a list of the chief ministers of state (vers. 2–6), and of the twelve officers placed over the land (vers. 7–20), which is inserted here to give an idea of the might and glory of the kingdom of Israel under Solomon's reign. So far as the contents are concerned, this list belongs to the middle portion of the reign of Solomon, as we may see from the fact that two of the officers named had daughters of Solomon for their wives (vers. 11, 15), whom they could not possibly have married till the later years of Solomon's life.

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[1] Grotius observes on this: "The ἀγχίνοια of Solomon was shown by this to be very great. There is a certain similarity in the account of Ariopharnis, king of the Thracians, who, when three persons claimed to be the sons of the king of the Cimmerii, decided that he was the son who would not obey the command to cast javelins at his father's corpse. The account is given by Diodorus Siculus."

Vers. 1–6. THE CHIEF MINISTERS OF STATE.—The list is introduced in ver. 1 by the general remark, that "king Solomon was king over all Israel."—Ver. 2. The first of the שָׂרִים, princes, *i.e.* chief ministers of state or dignitaries, mentioned here is not the commander-in-chief, as under the warlike reign of David (2 Sam. viii. 16, xx. 23), but, in accordance with the peaceful rule of Solomon, the administrator of the kingdom (or prime minister): "*Azariah* the son of Zadok was הַכֹּהֵן," *i.e.* not the priest, but the administrator of the kingdom, the representative of the king before the people; like כֹּהֵן in ver. 5, where this word is interpreted by רֵעֶה הַמֶּלֶךְ, with this difference, however, arising from the article before כֹּהֵן, that *Azariah* was the *Kohen par excellence*, that is to say, held the first place among the confidential counsellors of the king, so that his dignity was such as befitted the office of an administrator of the kingdom. Compare the explanation of כֹּהֵן at 2 Sam. viii. 18. The view of the Vulgate, Luther, and others, which has been revived by Thenius, namely, that כֹּהֵן is to be connected as a genitive with בֶּן־צָדוֹק in opposition to the accents, "Azariah the son of Zadok the priest," is incorrect, and does not even yield any sense, since the connection of these words with the following *Elichoreph*, etc., is precluded by the absence of the copula *Vav*, which would be indispensable if Azariah had held the same office as the two brothers Elichoreph and Achijah.[1] Moreover, Azariah the son of Zadok cannot be a grandson of Zadok the high priest, *i.e.* a son of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok, as many infer from 1 Chron. v. 34, 35 (vi. 8, 9); for, apart from the fact that Zadok's grandson can hardly have been old enough at the time for Solomon to invest him with

[1] The objection by which Thenius tries to set aside this argument, which has been already advanced by *Houbigant*, viz. that "if the first (Azariah) was not also a state scribe, the copula would be inserted, as it is everywhere else from ver. 4 onwards when a new office is mentioned," proves nothing at all, because the copula is also omitted in ver. 3, where the new office of מַזְכִּיר is introduced.

the chief dignity in the kingdom, which would surely be conferred upon none but men of mature years, we can see no reason why the Azariah mentioned here should not be called the son of Ahimaaz. If the Zadok referred to here was the high priest of that name, Azariah can only have been a brother of Ahimaaz. And there is no real difficulty in the way, since the name Azariah occurs three times in the line of high priests (1 Chron. v. 36, 39), and therefore was by no means rare.—Ver. 3. *Elichoreph* and *Achijah*, sons of *Shisha*, who had held the same office under David, were secretaries of state (סֹפְרִים: see at 2 Sam. viii. 17 and xx. 25, where the different names שִׁישָׁא = שְׁיָא and שְׂרָיָה are also discussed).—*Jehoshaphat* the son of Ahilud was the chancellor, as he had already been in the time of David (2 Sam. viii. 17 and xx. 24). The rendering of Thenius, "whilst Jehoshaphat was chancellor," is grammatically impossible.—Ver. 4. On *Benaiah*, compare ch. ii. 35 and the Commentary on 2 Sam. xxiii. 20. On *Zadok* and *Abiathar*, see at 2 Sam. viii. 17. It appears strange that Abiathar should be named as priest, *i.e.* as high priest, along with Zadok, since Solomon had deposed him from the priestly office (ch. ii. 27, 35), and we cannot imagine any subsequent pardon. The only possible explanation is that proposed by Theodoret, namely, that Solomon had only deprived him of the *ἀρχή*, *i.e.* of the priest's office, but not of the *ἱερωσύνη* or priestly dignity, because this was hereditary.[1]—Ver. 5. *Azariah* the son of Nathan was over the נִצָּבִים, *i.e.* the twelve officers named in vers. 7 sqq. *Zabud* the son of Nathan was כֹּהֵן (not the son of "Nathan the priest," as Luther and many others render it). כֹּהֵן is explained by the epithet appended, רֵעֶה הַמֶּלֶךְ: privy councillor, *i.e.* confidential adviser of the king. Nathan is not the prophet of that name, as Thenius supposes, but the son of David mentioned in 2 Sam. v. 14. Azariah and Zabud were therefore nephews of Solomon.—Ver. 6. *Ahishar* was עַל הַבַּיִת, over the palace, *i.e.* governor of the palace, or minister of the king's household (compare ch. xvi. 9, 2 Kings xviii. 18, and Isa. xxii. 15), an office met with for the first time under Solomon. *Adoniram*, probably the same person as *Adoram* in 2 Sam. xx. 24, was chief overseer of the tributary service. He was so in the time of David also.

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[1] *Τὴν ἀρχὴν ἀφείλατο, οὐ τῆς ἱερωσύνης ἐγύμνωσεν· τὴν γὰρ τῆς ἱερωσύνης ἀξίαν οὐκ ἐκ χειροτονίας, ἀλλ' ἐκ γονικῆς εἶχον διαδοχῆς.*—THEODORET.

Vers. 7–19. Solomon's Official Persons and their Districts.—Ver. 7. Solomon had (appointed) twelve נִצָּבִים over all Israel, who provided (כִּלְכְּלוּ) for the king and his house, *i.e.* supplied provisions for the necessities of the court. These prefects are not to be regarded as "chamberlains," or administrators of the royal domains (Michaelis and Ewald), for these are mentioned in 1 Chron. xxvii. 25 sqq. under a different title. They are "general receivers of taxes," or "chief tax-collectors," as Rosenmüller expresses it, who levied the king's duties or taxes, which consisted in the East, as they still do to the present time, for the most part of natural productions, or the produce of the land, and not of money payments as in the West, and delivered them at the royal kitchen (Rosenmüller, *A. und N. Morgenland*, iii. p. 166). It cannot be inferred from the explanation given by Josephus, *ἡγεμόνες καὶ στρατηγοί*, that they exercised a kind of government, as Thenius supposes, since this explanation is nothing but a subjective conjecture. "One month in the year was it every one's duty (יִהְיֶה עַל אֶחָד) to provide." The districts assigned to the twelve prefects coincide only partially with the territories of the tribes, because the land was probably divided among them according to its greater or smaller productiveness. Moreover, the order in which the districts are enumerated is not a geographical one, but probably follows the order in which the different prefects had to send the natural productions month by month for the maintenance of the king's court. The description begins with Ephraim in ver. 8, then passes over in ver. 9 to the territory of Dan to the west of it, in ver. 10 to the territory of Judah and Simeon on the south, in vers. 11 and 12 to the territory of Manasseh on this side from the Mediterranean to the Jordan, then in vers. 13 and 14 to the territory of Manasseh on the other side of the Jordan, thence back again in vers. 15 and 16 to the northern parts of the land on this side, viz. the territories of Naphtali and Asher, and thence farther south to Issachar in ver. 17, and Benjamin in ver. 18, closing at last in ver. 19 with Gilead.—Vers. 8 sqq. In the names of the prefects we are struck with the fact, that in the case of five of them the names given are not their own but their fathers' names. It is very improbable that the proper names should have dropped out five times (as Clericus, Michaelis, and others suppose); and consequently there is simply the assumption left, that the persons in question bore their fathers' names with *Ben* prefixed as their own proper names: *Benhur, Bendeker,* etc., after the analogy of *Benchanan* in 1 Chron. iv. 20 and others, although such a proper name as *Ben-Abinadab* (ver. 11) appears very strange. *Benhur* was stationed on the mountains of Ephraim. These mountains, here only the mountainous district of the tribe of Ephraim, were among the most fruitful portions of Palestine (see at Josh. xvii. 14, 15).—Ver. 9. *Bendeker* was in *Makaz,* a city only mentioned here, the situation of which is unknown, but which is at any rate to be sought for in the tribe of Dan, to which the other cities of this district belong. *Shaalbim* has probably been preserved in the present *Selbit,* to the north-west of *Yâlo* (see at Josh. xix. 42). *Bethshemesh,* the present *Ain-Shems* (see at Josh. xv. 10). *Elon* (אֵילוֹן), which is distinguished from *Ajalon* (Josh. xix. 42 and 43) by the epithet *Bethchanan,* and belonged to the tribe of Dan, has not yet been discovered (see at Josh. xix. 43). The LXX. have arbitrarily interpolated ἕως before *Bethchanan,* and Thenius naturally takes this under his protection, and consequently traces *Bethchanan* in the village of *Beit Hunûn* (Rob. *Pal.* ii. p. 371), but without considering that ἕως yields no reasonable sense unless preceded by מִן, ἐκ (from; cf. ver. 12).—Ver. 10. *Benhesed* was in *Arubboth,* which does not occur again, so that its situation, even if it should be identical with *Arab* in Josh. xv. 52, as Böttcher conjectures, can only be approximatively inferred from the localities which follow. To him (לוֹ), *i.e.* to his district, belonged *Sochoh* and all the land of *Hepher.* From *Sochoh* we may see that Benhesed's district was in the tribe of Judah. Of the two *Sochohs* in Judah, that still exist under the name of *Shuweikeh,* it is impossible to determine with certainty which is intended here, whether the one upon the mountains (Josh. xv. 48) or the one in the plain (Josh. xv. 35). The fact that it is associated with the land of *Hepher* rather favours the latter. The land of *Hepher,* which must not be confounded with the city of *Gath-Hepher* in the tribe of Zebulun (Josh. xix. 13; 2 Kings xiv. 25), but was the territory of one of the Canaanitish kings who were defeated by Joshua, was probably situated in the plain (see at Josh. xii. 17).—Ver. 11. *Ben-Abinadab* had the whole of the high range of *Dor* (נָפַת דּאֹר, Josh. xii. 23), *i.e.* the strip of coast on the Mediterranean Sea below the promontory of Carmel, where the city of *Dor,* which has been preserved in the village of *Tantura* or *Tortura,* nine miles to the north of Cæsarea, was situated (see at Josh. xi. 2). Whether this district embraced the fruitful plain of Sharon is not so clearly made out as Thenius supposes. בֶּן־אֲבִינָדָב stands at the head absolutely, without any grammatical connection with כָּל־נָפַת: "Abinadab: the whole of the high range of Dor," etc. The person named was probably a son of David's eldest brother but one (1 Sam. xvi. 8, xvii. 13), and therefore Solomon's cousin; and he had married Solomon's daughter.—Ver. 12. *Baana* the son of Ahilud was most likely a brother of Jehoshaphat the chancellor (ver. 3). This district embraced the cities on the southern edge of the plain of Jezreel, and extended to the Jordan. *Taanach* and *Megiddo*, which have been preserved in the villages of *Taanuk* and *Lejun*, were situated on the south-western border of this plain, and belonged to the Manassites (see at Josh. xii. 21, xvii. 11). "And all Bethshean," in other words, the whole of the district of Bethshean, *i.e.* Beisan, at the eastern end of the valley of Jezreel, where it opens into the Jordan valley (Rob. *Pal.* ii. p. 740 sqq.), "which (district was situated) by the side of Zarthan below Jezreel, from (the town of) Bethshean (see at Josh. xvii. 11) to Abel-Mecholah, on the other side of Jokmeam." *Zarthan*, also called *Zereda* (compare ch. vii. 46 with 2 Chron. iv. 17), has probably been preserved, so far as the name is concerned, in *Kurn Sartabeh*, in the neighbourhood of which the old city probably stood, about five miles to the south of Beisan, at a point where the Jordan valley contracts (see at Josh. iii. 16). The expression "below Jezreel" refers to "all Bethshean," and may be explained from the elevated situation of Jezreel, the present *Zerîn* (see at Josh. xix. 18). According to Rob. iii. p. 163, this is "comparatively high, and commands a wide and noble view, extending down the broad low valley on the east of Beisan and to the mountains of Ajlun beyond the Jordan." The following words, "from Bethshean to Abel-Mecholah," give a more precise definition of the boundary. The LXX. have erroneously inserted *καὶ* before מִבֵּית־שְׁאָן, and Thenius and Böttcher defend it on the strength of their erroneous interpretations of the preceding statements. *Abel-Mecholah* was in the Jordan valley, according to the *Onomast.*, ten Roman miles to the south of Beisan (see at Judg. vii. 22). The last clause is not quite intelligible to us, as the situation of the Levitical city *Jokmeam* (1 Chron. vi. 53, or *Kibzaim*, a different place from the *Jokneam* on Carmel, Josh. xii. 22, xxi. 34) has not yet been discovered (see at Josh. xxi. 22). According to this, Baanah's district in the Jordan valley did not extend so far as *Kurn Sartabeh,* but simply to the neighbourhood of Zarthan, and embraced the whole of the tribe-territory of Manasseh on this side of the Jordan.—Ver. 13. Bengeber was in *Ramoth* of Gilead in the tribe of Gad (Josh. xx. 8), probably on the site of the modern *Szalt* (see at Deut. iv. 43). "To him belonged the *Havvoth Jair* (Jair's-lives) in Gilead, to him the region of *Argob* in Bashan, sixty great cities with walls and brazen bolts." If we look at this passage alone, the region of Argob in Bashan appears to be distinct from the Havvoth Jair in Gilead. But if we compare it with Num. xxxii. 40, 41, Deut. iii. 4, 5, and 13, 14, and Josh. xiii. 30, it is evident from these passages that the Jair's-lives are identical with the sixty large and fortified cities of the region of Argob. For, according to Deut. iii. 4, these sixty fortified cities, with high walls, gates, and bars, were all fortified cities of the kingdom of Og of Bashan, which the Israelites conquered under Moses, and to which, according to Num. xxxii. 41, Jair the Manassite, who had conquered them, gave the name of *Havvoth Jair.* Hence it is stated in Josh. xiii. 30, that the sixty Jair-towns were situated in Bashan. Consequently the לוֹ חֶבֶל אר׳ in our verse is to be taken as a more precise definition of לוֹ חַוֹּת יָאִיר וגו׳, or a clearer description of the district superintended by *Bengeber,* so that *Gilead* is used, as is frequently the case, in the broader sense of *Peræa.* Compare with this the Commentary on Deut. iii. 4 and 13, 14, where the names אַרְגֹּב and חַוֹּת are explained, and the imaginary discrepancy between the sixty Jair's-towns in the passages cited, and the twenty-three and thirty cities of Jair in 1 Chron. ii. 22 and Judg. x. 4, is discussed and solved. And when Thenius objects to this explanation on the ground that the villages of Jair cannot be identical with the sixty fortified cities, because villages of nomads and strongly fortified cities could not be one and the same, this objection falls to the ground with the untenable interpretation of חַוֹּת as applying to nomad villages.—Ver. 14. *Ahinadab* the son of Iddo received as his district *Mahanaim,* a fortified and probably also a very important city to the north of the Jabbok, on the border of the tribe of Gad, which may perhaps have been preserved in the ruin of *Mahneh* (see at Josh. xiii. 26 and Gen. xxxii. 3). מַחֲנָיְמָה, to Mahanaim (cf. Ewald, § 216, *a,* note), with ה local, probably referring to the fact that Ahinadab was sent away to Mahanaim.—Ver. 15. *Ahimaaz*, possibly Zadok's son (2 Sam. xv. 27, xvii. 17 sqq.), in *Naphtali*. This does not denote generally "the most northern portion of the land, say from the northern end of the lake of Gennesaret into Cœle-Syria," as Thenius supposes; for the tribe-territory of Asher, which had a prefect of its own, was not situated to the south-west of Naphtali, but ran along the west of Naphtali to the northern boundary of Canaan (see at Josh. xix. 24–31). He also (like Ben-Abinadab, ver. 11) had a daughter of Solomon, Basmath, as his wife.—Ver. 16. *Baanah* the son of *Hushai*, probably the faithful friend and wise counsellor of David (2 Sam. xv. 32 sqq., xvii. 5 sqq.), was in *Asher* and בְּעָלוֹת, a name quite unknown. If ב forms part of the word (*Baaloth*, according to the LXX., Vulg., Syr., and Arab.), we must take it as a district, since the preposition ב would necessarily have been repeated if a district (*Asher*) had been connected with a town (*Baaloth*). In any case, it is not the city of Baaloth in the Negeb of Judah (Josh. xv. 24) that is intended.—Ver. 17. *Jehoshaphat* the son of Paruach, in *Issachar*; *i.e.* over the whole of the territory of that tribe in the plain of Jezreel, with the exception of the cities of Taanach, Megiddo, and Bethshean, which were in the southern portion of it, and were allotted to the Manassites, and, according to ver. 12, were put under the care of Baanah; and not merely in the northern part of Issachar, "with the exception of the plain of Jezreel," as Thenius erroneously maintains. Zebulun may possibly have also formed part of his district, if not entirely, yet in its southern portion, provided that the northern portion was assigned to Ahimaaz in Naphtali, since Zebulun had no prefect of its own.—Ver. 18. *Shimei* the son of Elah, possibly the one mentioned in ch. i. 8, in *Benjamin*.—Ver. 19. *Geber* the son of Uri, in the land of *Gilead*, *i.e.*, as the apposition "the land of Sihon . . . and of Og . . ." clearly shows, the whole of the Israelitish land on the east of the Jordan, as in Deut. xxxiv. 1, Judg. xx. 1, etc., with the simple exception of the districts placed under Bengeber and Ahinadab (vers. 13 and 14). נְצִיב אֶחָד, "one president was it who (was) in the land (of Gilead)." נְצִיב cannot signify a military post or a garrison here, as in 1 Sam. x. 5, xiii. 3, etc., but is equivalent to נִצָּב, the president (ver. 7). The meaning is, that notwithstanding the great extent of this district, it had only one prefect.

In ver. 20 the account of Solomon's officers is closed by a general remark as to the prosperous condition of the whole nation; though we miss the copula *Vav* at the commencement. The words, "Judah and Israel were numerous as the sand by the sea," indicate that the promise given to the patriarchs (Gen. xxii. 17, cf. xxxii. 13) had been fulfilled. To this there is appended in ch. v. 1 the remark concerning the extent of Solomon's sway, which prepares the way for what follows, and shows how the other portion of the promise, "thy seed will possess the gates of its enemies," had been fulfilled.—The first fourteen verses of ch. v. are therefore connected by the LXX., Vulg., Luther, and others with ch. iv. It is not till ch. v. 15 that a new section begins.

CHAP. IV. 21–28 (v. 1–8). SOLOMON'S REGAL SPLENDOUR.—Ver. 21. "Solomon was ruler over all the kingdoms from the river (Euphrates) onwards, over the land of the Philistines to the border of Egypt, who brought presents and were subject to Solomon his whole life long." Most of the commentators supply וְעַד before אֶרֶץ פְּלִשְׁתִּים (even to the land of the Philistines) after the parallel passage 2 Chron. ix. 26, so that the following וְעַד גְּבוּל would give a more precise definition of the *terminus ad quem.* But it is by no means probable that וְעַד, which appears to be indispensable, should have dropped out through the oversight of a copyist, and it is not absolutely necessary to supply it, inasmuch as בְּ may be repeated in thought before אֶרֶץ פ׳ from the preceding clause. The participle מַגִּשִׁים is construed *ad sensum* with מַמְלָכוֹת. Bringing presents is equivalent to paying tribute, as in 2 Sam. viii. 2, etc.—Vers. 22 sqq. The splendour of the court, the consumption in the royal kitchen (vers. 22–25), and the well-filled stables (vers. 26–28), were such as befitted the ruler of so large a kingdom.—Vers. 22, 23. The daily consumption of לֶחֶם (food or provisions) amounted to thirty *cors* of fine meal (סֹלֶת = סֹלֶת חִטִּים, fine sifted meal, Ex. xxix. 2; *for* סֹלֶת see also Lev. ii. 1) and sixty *cors* of קֶמַח, ordinary meal, ten fattened oxen, twenty pasture oxen, which were brought directly from the pasture and slaughtered, and a hundred sheep, beside different kinds of game. כֹּר, *κορός*, the later name for חֹמֶר, the largest dry and also liquid (ch. v. 11) measure of capacity, contained ten ephahs or baths, *i.e.*, according to the calculation made by Thenius, 15,300 cubic inches (Dresden) = about

$1\frac{7}{8}$ *scheffel*;[1] so that ninety cors would amount to 171 *scheffel*, from which 28,000 lbs. of bread could be baked (*Theol. Stud. und Krit.* 1846, pp. 132, 133). And "if we reckon 2 lbs. of bread to each person, there would be 14,000 persons in Solomon's court." The consumption of flesh would be quite in proportion to that of bread; for ten fattened oxen, twenty oxen from the pasture, and a hundred sheep, yield more than 21,000 lbs. of meat, that is to say, a pound and a half for each person, "assuming, according to the statements of those who are acquainted with the matter, that the edible meat of a fat ox amounts to 600 lbs., that of an ox from the pasture to 400 lbs., and that of a sheep to 70 lbs." (Thenius *ut sup.*). This daily consumption of Solomon's court will not appear too great, if, on the one hand, we compare it with the quantity consumed at other oriental courts both of ancient and modern times,[2] and if, on the other hand, we bear in mind that not only the numerous attendants upon the king and his harem, but also the royal adjutants and the large number of officers employed about the court, were supplied from the king's table, and that their families had also to be fed, inasmuch as the wages in oriental courts are all paid in kind. In addition to this, game was also supplied to the king's table: viz. אַיָּל stags, צְבִי gazelles, יַחְמוּר fallow-deer, and בַּרְבֻּרִים אֲבוּסִים "fattened fowl." The meaning of בַּרְבֻּרִים is doubtful. The earlier translators render it birds or fowl. Kimchi adopts the rendering "capons;" *Tanch. Hieros.* "geese," so called from their pure (בָּרַר) white feathers; and both Gesenius and Dietrich (*Lex.*) decide in favour of the latter. The word must denote some special kind of fowl, since edible birds in general were called צִפֳּרִים (Neh. v. 18).—Vers. 24, 25. Solomon was able to appropriate all this to his court, because (כִּי) he had dominion, etc.; . . . and (ver. 25) Israel and Judah enjoyed the blessings of peace during the whole of his reign. בְּכָל־עֵבֶר הַנָּהָר, "over all the other side of the river (Euphrates)," *i.e.* not the land on the east, but that on the west of the river. This usage of speech is to be explained from the fact that the author of our books, who was living in exile on the other side of the Euphrates, describes the extent of Solomon's kingdom taking that as his starting-point. Solomon's power only extended to the Euphrates, from *Tiphsach* in the north-east to *Gaza* in the south-west. תִּפְסַח (crossing, from פָּסַח) is *Thapsacus*, a large and wealthy city on the western bank of the Euphrates, at which the armies of the younger Cyrus and Alexander crossed the river (Xen. *Anab.* i. 4; Arrian, *Exped. Alex.* iii. 7). *Gaza*, the southernmost city of the Philistines, the present *Guzzeh;* see at Josh. xiii. 3. The מַלְכֵי עֵבֶר הַנָּהָר are the kings of Syria who were subjugated by David (2 Sam. viii. 6 and x. 19), and of the Philistines (2 Sam. viii. 1). "And he had peace on all sides round about." This statement does not "most decidedly contradict ch. xi. 23 sqq.," as Thenius maintains; for it cannot be proved that according to this passage the revolt of Damascus had taken place before Solomon's reign (Ewald and others; see at ch. xi. 23 sqq.).—Ver. 25. "Judah and Israel sat in safety, every one under his vine and his fig-tree." This expresses the undisturbed enjoyment of the costly productions of the land (2 Kings xviii. 31), and is therefore used by the prophets as a figure denoting the happiness of the Messianic age (Mic. iv. 4; Zech. iii. 10). "From Dan to Beersheba," as in Judg. xx. 1, etc.—Ver. 26. This verse is not to be regarded "as a parenthesis according to the intention of the editor," but gives a further proof of the peace and prosperity which the kingdom and people enjoyed under Solomon. Solomon had a strong force of war chariots and cavalry, that he might be able to suppress every attempt on the part of the tributary kings of Syria and Philistia to revolt and disturb the peace. "Solomon had 4000 racks of horses for his chariots, and 12,000 riding horses," which were kept partly in Jerusalem and partly in cities specially built for the purpose (ch. ix. 19, x. 26; 2 Chron. i. 14, ix. 25). אַרְבָּעִים (40) is an old copyist's error for אַרְבָּעָה (4), which we find in the parallel passage 2 Chron. ix. 25, and as we may also infer from ch. x. 26 and 2 Chron. i. 14, since according to these passages Solomon had 1400 רֶכֶב or war chariots. For 4000 horses are a very suitable number for 1400 chariots, though not 40,000, since two draught horses were required for every war chariot, and one horse may have been kept as a reserve. אֻרְוָה does not mean a team (Ges.), but a rack or box in a stable, from אָרָה, *carpere.* According to Vegetius, i. 56, in Bochart (*Hieroz.* i. p. 112, ed. Ros.), even in ancient times every horse had its own crib in the stable just as it has now. Böttcher (*n. ex. Krit. Achrenl.* ii. p. 27) is wrong in supposing that there were several horses, say at least ten, to one rack. מֶרְכָּב is used collectively for "chariots."—Ver. 27. "And" = a still further proof of the blessings of peace—"those prefects (vers. 7 sqq.) provided for king Solomon, and all who came to the king's table, *i.e.* who were fed from the royal table, every one his month (see at ver. 7), so that nothing was wanting (ver. 28), and conveyed the barley (the ordinary food of cattle in Palestine and the southern lands, where oats are not cultivated) and the straw for the horses and coursers to the place where it ought to be. To אֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה שָׁם the LXX., Vulg., and others supply הַמֶּלֶךְ as the subject: wherever *the king* might stay. This is certainly more in harmony with the imperfect יִהְיֶה than it would be to supply הָרֶכֶשׁ, as Bochart and others propose; still it is hardly correct. For in that case לַסּוּסִים וְלָרֶכֶשׁ could only be understood as referring to the chariot horses and riding horses, which Solomon kept for the necessities of his court, and not to the whole of the cavalry; since we cannot possibly assume that even if Solomon changed his residence according to the season and to suit his pleasure, or on political grounds, as Thenius supposes, though this cannot by any means be inferred from ch. ix. 18 and 19, he took 16,000 horses about with him. But this limitation of the clause is evidently at variance with the context, since לַסּוּסִים וְלָרֶכֶשׁ too plainly refer back to ver. 6. Moreover, "if the king were intended, he would certainly have been mentioned by name, as so many other subjects and objects have come between." For these reasons we agree with Böttcher in taking יִהְיֶה indefinitely: "where it (barley and straw) was wanted, according to the distribution of the horses." רֶכֶשׁ probably denotes a very superior kind of horse, like the German *Renner* (a courser or race-horse). אִישׁ כְּמִשְׁפָּטוֹ, every one according to his right, *i.e.* whatever was appointed for him as right.

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[1] The *scheffel* is about an English sack (*vid.* Flügel's *Dict.*).—Tr.

[2] According to Athen. *Deipnos.* iv. 10, the kings of Persia required a thousand oxen a day; and according to Tavernier, in Rosenmüller's *A. u. N. Morgenland*, iii. pp. 166, 167, five hundred sheep and lambs were slaughtered daily for the Sultan's court.

Vers. 29–34. Solomon's Wisdom.—Ver. 29. According to His promise in ch. iii. 12, God gave Solomon wisdom and very much insight and רֹחַב לֵב, "breadth of heart," *i.e.* a comprehensive understanding, as sand by the sea-shore,—a proverbial expression for an innumerable multitude, or great abundance (cf. ch. iv. 20, Gen. xli. 49, Josh. xi. 4, etc.). חָכְמָה signifies rather practical wisdom, ability to decide what is the judicious and useful course to pursue; תְּבוּנָה, rather keenness of understanding to arrive at the correct solution of difficult and complicated problems; רֹחַב לֵב, mental capacity to embrace the most diverse departments of knowledge.—Ver. 30. His wisdom was greater than the wisdom of all the sons of the East, and all the wisdom of the Egyptians. בְּנֵי קֶדֶם (sons of the East) are generally the Arabian tribes dwelling in the east of Canaan, who spread as far as to the Euphrates (cf. Judg. vi. 3, 33, vii. 12, viii. 10, Job i. 3, Isa. xi. 14, etc.). Hence we find אֶרֶץ קֶדֶם used in Gen. xxv. 6 to denote Arabia in the widest sense, on the east and south-east of Palestine; whereas in Gen. xxix. 1 אֶרֶץ בְּנֵי קֶדֶם signifies the land beyond the Euphrates, viz. Mesopotamia, and in Num. xxiii. 7, הַרְרֵי קֶדֶם, the mountains of Mesopotamia. Consequently by "the sons of the East" we are to understand here primarily the Arabians, who were celebrated for their gnomic wisdom, more especially the Sabæans (see at ch. x.), including the Idumæans, particularly the Temanites (Jer. xlix. 7; Obad. 8); but also, as כֹּל requires, the Chaldæans, who were celebrated both for their astronomy and astrology. "*All* the wisdom of the Egyptians," because the wisdom of the Egyptians, which was so greatly renowned as almost to have become proverbial (cf. Isa. xix. 11, xxxi. 2, and Acts vii. 22; Joseph. *Ant.* viii. 2, 5; Herod. ii. 160), extended over the most diverse branches of knowledge, such as geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, and astrology (Diod. Sic. i. 73 and 81), and as their skill in the preparation of ointments from vegetable and animal sources, and their extensive acquaintance with medicine, clearly prove, embraced natural science as well, in which Solomon, according to ver. 33, was very learned.—Ver. 31. "He was wiser than all men (of his time), than Ethan the Ezrachite and Heman, Chalcol and Darda, the sons of Machol." These four persons are most probably the same as the "sons of Zerach" (Ethan, Heman, Calcol, and Dara) mentioned in 1 Chron. ii. 6, since the names perfectly agree, with the exception of דָּרַע for דַּרְדַּע, where the difference is no doubt attributable to a copyist's error; although, as the name does not occur again, it cannot be decided whether *Dara* or *Darda* is the correct form. *Heman* and *Ethan* are also called Ezrachites (הָאֶזְרָחִי) in Ps. lxxxviii. 1 and lxxxix. 1; and אֶזְרָחִי is another form of זַרְחִי, the name of the family of *Zerach* the son of Judah (Num. xxvi. 13, 20), lengthened by א *prosthet.* But they were both Levites—*Heman* a Korahite of the line of

Kohath and a grandson of Samuel (1 Chron. vi. 18, 19), and *Ethan* a Merarite (1 Chron. vi. 29–32, xv. 17) and the president of the Levitical vocal choirs in the time of David (1 Chron. xv. 19); and *Heman* was also "the king's seer in the words of God" (1 Chron. xxv. 5). Their Levitical descent is not at variance with the epithet Ezrachite. For as the Levite in Judg. xvii. 7 is spoken of as belonging to the family of Judah, because he dwelt in Bethlehem of Judah, and as Samuel's father, Elkanah the Levite, is called an Ephraimite in 1 Sam. i. 1, because in his civil capacity he was incorporated into the tribe of Ephraim, so *Heman* and *Ethan* are called Ezrachites because they were incorporated into the Judæan family of *Zerach*. It by no means follows from 1 Chron. ii. 6 that they were lineal descendants of *Zerach*. The whole character of the genealogical fragment contained in 1 Chron. ii. 6 sqq. shows very clearly that it does not give the lineal posterity of Zerach with genealogical exactness, but that certain persons and households of that family who had gained historical renown are grouped together without any more precise account of their lineal descent. *Calcol* and *Darda* (or *Dara*) are never met with again. It is no doubt to these two that the expression בְּנֵי מָחוֹל refers, though it cannot be determined whether מָחוֹל is a proper name or an appellative noun. In support of the appellative meaning, "sons of the dance," in the sense of *sacras choreas ducendi periti*, Hiller (in the *Onomast.* p. 872) appeals to Eccles. xii. 4, "daughters of song." —"And his name was," *i.e.* he was celebrated, "among all the nations round about" (cf. ch. x. 1, 23, 24).—Ver. 32. "He spoke three thousand proverbs, and there were a thousand and five of his songs." Of these proverbs we possess a comparatively small portion in the book of Proverbs, probably a selection of the best of his proverbs; but of the songs, besides the Song of Songs, we have only two psalms, viz. Ps. lxxii. and cxxvii., which have his name, and justly bear it.—Ver. 33. "And he spoke of trees, from the cedar on Lebanon to the hyssop which grows upon the wall." The cedar and hyssop are placed in antithesis, the former as the largest and most glorious of trees, the latter as the smallest and most insignificant of plants, to embrace the whole of the vegetable kingdom. Thenius maintains that by אֵזוֹב we are not to understand the true hyssop, nor the *Wohlgemuth* or *Dosten* (*ὀρίγανον*), according to the ordinary view (see at Ex. xii. 22), because they are neither of them such small plants as we should expect in antithesis to the cedar, but "one of the wall-mosses growing in tufts, more especially the *orthotrichum saxatile* (Oken), which forms a miniature hyssop with its lancet-shaped leaves, and from its extreme minuteness furnishes a perfect antithesis to the cedar." There is much to favour this view, since we can easily imagine that the Hebrews may have reckoned a moss, which resembled the hyssop in its leaves, as being itself a species of hyssop.—"And of beasts and birds, of creeping things and fishes;" the four principal classes into which the Hebrews divided the animal kingdom. *Speaking* of plants and animals presupposes observations and researches in natural science, or botanical and zoological studies.—Ver. 34. The wide-spread fame of his wisdom brought many strangers to Jerusalem, and all the more because of its rarity at that time, especially among princes. The coming of the queen of Sheba to Jerusalem (ch. x.) furnishes a historical proof of this.[1]

CHAP. V. (V. 15–32). PREPARATIONS FOR BUILDING THE TEMPLE.

Immediately after the consolidation of his kingdom, Solomon commenced the preparations for the building of a temple, first of all by entering into negotiations with king Hiram of Tyre, to procure from him not only the building materials requisite, viz. cedars, cypresses, and hewn stones, but also a skilled workman for the artistic work of the temple (vers. 1–12); and, secondly, by causing the number of workmen required for this great work to be raised out of his own kingdom, and sending them to Lebanon to prepare the materials for the building in connection with the Tyrian builders (vers. 13–18).—We have a parallel passage to this in 2 Chron. ii., which agrees with the account before us in all the leading points, but differs in many of the details, omitting several things which were not essential to the main fact, and communicating others which are passed over in our account, *e.g.* Solomon's request that a Tyrian workman might be sent. This shows that the two accounts are extracts from a common and more elaborate source, the historical materials being worked up in a free and independent manner according to the particular plan adopted by each of the two authors. (For further remarks on the mutual relation of the two narratives, see my *apologetischer Versuch über die Bücher der Chronik*, pp. 216 sqq.)

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[1] Greatly as the fame of Solomon's wisdom is extolled in these verses, it was far outdone in subsequent times. Even Josephus has considerably adorned the biblical accounts in his *Antiqq.* viii. 2, 5. He makes Solomon the author not only of 1005 *βιβλία περὶ ᾠδῶν καὶ μελῶν*, and 300 *βίβλους παραβολῶν καὶ εἰκόνων*, but also of magical books with marvellous contents. Compare the extracts from *Eupolemus* in Eusebii *præp. Ev.* ix. 31 sqq., the remnants of Solomon's apocryphal writings in Fabricii *Cod. apocr. V. T.* i. pp. 914 sqq. and 1014 sq., the collection of the Talmudical Sagas in Othonis *Lex. rabb. philol.* pp. 668 sq., and G. Weil, *bibl. Legenden der Mussulmänner*, pp. 225–279. According to the Koran (*Sure* xxvii. vers. 17 sqq.), Solomon understood the languages not only of men and demons, but also of birds and ants. The Turkish literature contains a "Book of Solomon," *Suleimanname*, consisting of seventy volumes, from which v. Hammer (*Rosenöl*, i. p. 147 sqq.) has given extracts.

Vers. 1-12. *Solomon's negotiations with Hiram of Tyre.*—Ver. 1. When king Hiram of Tyre heard that Solomon had been anointed king in the place of David, he sent his servants, *i.e.* an embassage, to Solomon, to congratulate him (as the Syriac correctly explains) on his ascent of the throne, because he had been a friend of David the whole time (כָּל־הַיָּמִים, *i.e.* as long as both of them (David and Hiram) were kings). On *Hiram* and the length of his reign, see the remarks on 2 Sam. v. 11. This is passed over in the Chronicles as having no essential bearing upon the building of the temple.—Vers. 2-6. Solomon thereupon communicated to Hiram, by means of an embassy, his intention to carry out the building of the temple which his father projected, and asked him for building wood from Lebanon for the purpose. From the words, "Thou knowest that my father David could not build," etc., it is evident that David had not only been busily occupied for a long time with the plan for building a temple, but that he had already commenced negotiations with Hiram on the matter; and with this 1 Chron. xxii. 4 agrees. "To the name of Jehovah:" this expression is based upon Deut. xii. 5 and 11: "the place which the Lord shall choose to put His name there, or that His name may dwell there." The name of Jehovah is the manifestation of the divine nature in a visible sign as a real pledge of His presence (see at xii. 5), and not merely *numen Jovæ quatenus ab hominibus cognoscitur, colitur, celebratur* (Winer, Thenius). Hence in 2 Sam. vii., to which Solomon refers, בָּנָה לִי בַיִת (vers. 5 and 7) alternates with בָּנָה בַיִת לִשְׁמִי (ver. 13). On the obstacle which prevented it, "because of the war, with which they (the enemies) had surrounded me," see at 2 Sam. vii. 9 sqq. On the construction,

סָבַב with a double accusative, compare the very similar passage, Ps. cix. 3, which fully establishes the rendering we have given, so that there is no necessity to assume that מִלְחָמָה, war, stands for enemies (Ewald, § 317, *b*).—Ver. 4. "And now Jehovah my God has given me rest round about," such as David never enjoyed for a permanency (cf. 2 Sam. vii. 1). "No adversary is there." This is not at variance with ch. xi. 14, for Hadad's enterprise belonged to a later period (see the comm. on that passage). "And no evil occurrence:" such as the rebellions of Absalom and Sheba, the pestilence at the numbering of the people, and other events which took place in David's reign.—Ver. 5. "Behold, I intend to build." אָמַר followed by an infinitive, as in Ex. ii. 14, 2 Sam. xxi. 16. "As Jehovah spake to David;" viz. 2 Sam. vii. 12 and 13.—Ver. 6. "And now command that they fell me cedars from Lebanon." We may see from ver. 8 that Solomon had also asked for cypresses; and according to the parallel passage 2 Chron. ii. 6 sqq., he had asked for a skilful artist, which is passed over here, so that it is only in ch. vii. 13, 14 that we find a supplementary notice that Hiram had sent one. It is evident from this request, that that portion of Lebanon on which the cedars suitable for building wood grew, belonged to the kingdom of Hiram. The cedar forest, which has been celebrated from very ancient times, was situated at least two days' journey to the north of Beirut, near the northernmost and loftiest summits of the range, by the village of *Bjerreh*, to the north of the road which leads to Baalbek and not far to the east of the convent of *Canobin*, the seat of the patriarch of the Maronites, although Seetzen, the American missionaries, and Professor Ehrenberg found cedars and cedar groves in other places on northern Lebanon (see Rob. *Pal.* iii. 440, 441, and *Bibl. Res.* pp. 588 sqq.). The northern frontier of Canaan did not reach as far as *Bjerreh* (see at Num. xxxiv. 8, 9). "My servants shall be with thy servants," *i. e.* shall help them in the felling of the wood (see at vers. 28, 29). "And the wages of thy servants will I give to thee altogether as thou sayest" (see at vers. 25, 26). "For thou knowest that no one among us is skilful in felling trees like the Sidonians." This refers to the knowledge of the most suitable trees, of the right time for felling, and of the proper treatment of the wood. The expression *Sidonians* stands for Phœnicians generally, since Sidon was formerly more powerful than Tyre, and that portion of Lebanon which produced the cedars belonged to the district of Sidon. The inhabitants of Sidon were celebrated from time immemorial as skilful builders, and well versed in mechanical arts (compare Rob. *Pal.* iii. 421 sqq., and Movers, *Phœnizier*, ii. 1, pp. 86 sqq.).

Hiram rejoiced exceedingly at this proposal on the part of Solomon, and praised Jehovah for having given David so wise a son as his successor (ver. 21). It must have been a matter of great importance to the king of Tyre to remain on good terms with Israel, because the land of Israel was a granary for the Phœnicians, and friendship with such a neighbour would necessarily tend greatly to promote the interests of the Phœnician commerce. The praise of Jehovah on the part of Hiram does not presuppose a full recognition of Jehovah as the only true God, but simply that Hiram regarded the God of Israel as being as real a God as his own deities. Hiram expresses a fuller acknowledgment of Jehovah in 2 Chron. ii. 11, where he calls Jehovah the Creator of heaven and earth; which may be explained, however, from Hiram's entering into the religious notions of the Israelites, and does not necessarily involve his own personal belief in the true deity of Jehovah.—Vers. 8, 9. Hiram then sent to Solomon, and promised in writing (בִּכְתָב, 2 Chron. ii. 10) to comply with his wishes. אֵת אֲשֶׁר שָׁלַחְתָּ אֵלַי, "that which thou hast sent to me," *i.e.* hast asked of me by messenger. בְּרוֹשִׁים are not firs, but cypresses. "My servants shall bring down (the trees) from Lebanon to the sea, and I will make them into rafts (*i.e.* bind them into rafts and have them floated) upon the sea to the place which thou shalt send (word) to me, and will take them (the rafts) to pieces there, and thou wilt take (*i.e.* fetch them thence)." The Chronicles give *Yafo*, *i.e.* Joppa, Jaffa, the nearest harbour to Jerusalem on the Mediterranean Sea, as the landing-place (see at Josh. xix. 46). "And thou wilt do all my desire to give bread for my house," *i.e.* provisions to supply the wants of the king's court. "The שָׂכָר mentioned in ver. 6 was also to be paid" (Thenius). This is quite correct; but Thenius is wrong when he proceeds still further to assert, that the chronicler erroneously supposed this to refer to the servants of Hiram who were employed in working the wood. There is not a word of this kind in the Chronicles; but simply Solomon's promise to Hiram (ver. 9): "with regard to the hewers (the fellers of the trees), I give thy servants wheat 20,000 cors, and barley 20,000 cors, and wine

20,000 baths, and oil 20,000 baths." This is omitted in our account, in which the wages promised in ver. 6 to the Sidonian fellers of wood are not more minutely defined. On the other hand, the payment for the wood delivered by Solomon to Hiram, which is not mentioned in the Chronicles, is stated here in ver. 11. "Solomon gave Hiram 20,000 cors of wheat as food (מַכֹּלֶת, a contraction of מַאְכֹלֶת, from אָכַל; cf. Ewald, § 79, *b*) for his house (the maintenance of his royal court), and 20 cors of beaten oil; this gave Solomon to Hiram year by year," probably as long as the delivery of the wood or the erection of Solomon's buildings lasted. These two accounts are so clear, that Jac. Capp., Gramb., Mov., Thenius, and Bertheau, who have been led by critical prejudices to confound them with one another, and therefore to attempt to emend the one from the other, are left quite alone. For the circumstance that the quantity of wheat, which Solomon supplied to Hiram for his court, was just the same as that which he gave to the Sidonian workmen, does not warrant our identifying the two accounts. The fellers of the trees also received barley, wine, and oil in considerable quantities; whereas the only other thing which Hiram received for his court was oil, and that not common oil, but the finest olive oil, namely 20 cors of שֶׁמֶן כָּתִית, *i.e.* beaten oil, the finest kind of oil, which was obtained from the olives when not quite ripe by pounding them in mortars, and which had not only a whiter colour, but also a purer flavour than the common oil obtained by pressing from the ripe olives (cf. Celsii *Hierobot.* ii. pp. 349 sq., and Bähr, *Symbolik*, i. p. 419). Twenty cors were 200 baths, *i.e.*, according to the calculations of Thenius, about ten casks (1 cask = 6 pails; 1 pail = 72 cans). If we bear in mind that this was the finest kind of oil, we cannot speak of disproportion to the quantity of wheat delivered. Thenius reckons that 20,000 cors of wheat were about 38,250 Dresden *scheffeln* (? sacks).—Ver. 12. The remark that "the Lord gave Solomon wisdom" refers not merely to the treaty which Solomon made with Hiram, through which he obtained materials and skilled workmen for the erection of the house of God (Thenius), but also to the wise use which he made of the capacities of his own subjects for this work. For this verse not only brings to a close the section relating to Solomon's negotiations with Hiram, but it also forms an introduction to the following verses, in which the intimation given by Solomon in ver. 6, concerning the labourers who were to fell wood upon Lebanon in company with Hiram's men, is more minutely defined.

Vers. 13–18. *The tributary labourers out of Israel.*—Vers. 13, 14. Solomon raised a tribute (מַס, tribute-labourers, as in ch. iv. 6) out of all Israel, *i.e.* out of the whole nation (not "out of the whole territory of Israel," as Ewald supposes), 30,000 men, and sent them up to Lebanon, 10,000 a month in rotation; one month they were on Lebanon (doing tribute work), two months at home (looking after the cultivation of their own ground). וַיַּעַל, from הֶעֱלָה, does not mean *in tabulas referre*, in support of which appeal is made to 1 Chron. xxvii. 24, though on insufficient ground, but *ascendere fecit*, corresponding to the German *ausheben* (to raise). He raised them out of the nation, to send them up Lebanon (cf. ch. ix. 25). These 30,000 Israelitish labourers must be distinguished from the remnants of the Canaanites who were made into tribute-slaves (ver. 15 and ch. ix. 20). The latter are called מַס עֹבֵד, tribute-slaves, in ch. ix. 21 as in Josh. xvi. 10. That the Israelites were not to render the service of bondsmen is evident from the fact, that they only rendered tribute for four months of the year, and were at home for eight months; and the use of the epithet מַס is not at variance with this. For even if this word is applied elsewhere to the Canaanitish bondsmen (*e.g.* Josh. xvii. 13, Judg. i. 28, 30, and 2 Chron. viii. 8), a distinction is decidedly made in our account of Solomon between מַס and מַס עֹבֵד, inasmuch as in ch. ix. 22, after the Canaanitish bondsmen have been mentioned, it is expressly stated that "of Israel Solomon made no one a slave" (עֶבֶד). The 30,000 Israelitish tribute-servants are "to be thought of as free Israelites, who simply performed the less severe work of felling trees in fellowship with and under the direction of the subjects of Hiram (see at ver. 6), according to the command of the king, and probably not even that without remuneration" (Thenius). For *Adoniram* see at ch. iv. 6.—Ver. 15. And Solomon had 70,000 bearers of burdens and 80,000 hewers of stone on the mountains (of Lebanon). חֹצֵב is understood by the older translators as referring simply to hewers of stone. This is favoured both by the context, since ver. 18 speaks of stone-mason's work, and also by the usage of the language, inasmuch as חָצַב is mostly applied to the quarrying and cutting of stones (Deut. vi. 11; Isa. v. 2; Prov. ix. 1; 2 Kings xii. 13), and only occurs in Isa. x. 15 in connection with the cutting of wood. The hewing and preparing of the wood were amply provided for by 30,000 Israelites. That the 150,000 bearers of burdens and hewers of stone were not taken from the Israelites, is evident from the fact that they are distinguished from the latter, or at all events are not described as Israelites. We obtain certainty on this point from the parallel passages, ch. ix. 20, 21, 2 Chron. ii. 16, 17, and 2 Chron. viii. 1–9, according to which Solomon pressed the Canaanites who were left in the land to this bond-service.—Ver. 16. "Beside (לְבַד), *i.e.* without reckoning, the princes, Solomon's officers, who were over the work (*i.e.* the chiefs appointed by Solomon as overlookers of the work), 3300, who ruled over the people who laboured at the work." שָׂרֵי הַנִּצָּבִים, as Thenius correctly observes, cannot be the chief of the overlookers, *i.e.* the head inspectors, as there is no allusion made to subordinate inspectors, and the number given is much too large for head inspectors. נִצָּבִים, which is governed by שָׂרֵי in the construct state, is to be taken as defining the substantive: *principes qui præfecti erant* (Vatabl.; cf. Ewald, § 287, *a*). Moreover, at the close of the account of the whole of Solomon's buildings (ch. ix. 23), 550 more שָׂרֵי הַנִּצָּבִים are mentioned as presiding over the people who did the work. The accounts in the Chronicles differ from these in a very peculiar manner, the number of overseers being given in 2 Chron. ii. 17 as 3600, and in 2 Chron. viii. 10 as 250. Now, however natural it may be, with the multiplicity of errors occurring in numerical statements, to assume that these differences have arisen from copyists' errors through the confounding together of numerical letters resembling one another, this explanation is overthrown as an improbable one, by the fact that the sum-total of the overseers is the same in both accounts (3300 + 550 = 3850 in the books of Kings, and 3600 + 250 = 3850 in the Chronicles); and we must therefore follow J. H. Michaelis, and explain the differences as resulting from a different method of classification, namely, from the fact that in the Chronicles the Canaanitish overseers are distinguished from the Israelitish (viz. 3600 Canaanites and 250 Israelites), whereas in the books of Kings the *inferiores et superiores præfecti* are distinguished. Consequently Solomon had 3300 inferior overseers and 550 superior (or superintendents), of whom 250 were selected from the Israelites and 300 from the Canaanites. In 2 Chron. ii. 16, 17, it is expressly stated that the 3600 were taken from the גֵּרִים, *i.e.* the Canaanites who were left in the land of Israel. And it is equally certain that the number given in ch. ix. 23 and 2 Chron. viii. 10 (550 and 250) simply comprises the superintendents over the whole body of builders, notwithstanding the fact that in both passages (ch. v. 16 and ch. ix. 23) the same epithet שָׂרֵי הַנִּצָּבִים is used. If, then, the number of overseers is given in ch. ix. 23 as 550, *i.e.* 300 more than in the parallel passage of the Chronicles, there can hardly be any doubt that the number 550 includes the 300, in which the number given in our chapter falls short of that in the Chronicles, and that in the 3300 of our chapter the superintendents of Canaanitish descent are not included.[1]—Ver. 17. And the king had large, costly stones broken, " to lay the foundation of the house with hewn stones." יְקָרוֹת does not mean heavy (Thenius), for this would be a perfectly superfluous remark, inasmuch as large stones are always heavy, but costly, valuable stones, *qui multa pecunia constabant* (Cler.); compare ch. x. 2, where the word stands for precious stones. לְיַסֵּד, *i.e.* to lay the foundation for the temple, by which we are to understand not merely the foundation for the temple-house, but the magnificent substructions for the whole of the temple area, even though the strong walls which surrounded the temple mountain, and which Josephus describes in his *Antiquities*, viii. 3, 9, and xv. 11, 3, and in his *de Bell. Jud.* v. 5, 1, may not have been all completed by Solomon, but may have been a work of centuries. For further remarks on this subject, see at ch. vi. 38. אַבְנֵי גָזִית are squared stones, according to ch. vii. 10, of ten and eight cubits.

With ver. 18 the account of the preparations for the building of the temple, which were the object of Solomon's negotiations with Hiram, is brought to a close. " Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders, even the Giblites, hewed and prepared the wood and the stones for the building of the house." The object to יִפְסְלוּ is not the square stones mentioned before, but the trees

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[1] Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 292) assumes that " by the 550 (1 Kings ix. 23) we are to understand the actual superintendents, whereas the 3300 (1 Kings v. 30) include inferior inspectors as well; and of the 550 superintendents, 300 were taken from the Canaanæans, so that only 250 (2 Chron. viii. 10) were native Hebrews;" though he pronounces the number 3600 (2 Chron. ii. 17) erroneous. Bertheau, on the other hand, in his notes on 2 Chron. viii. 10, has rather complicated than elucidated the relation in which the two accounts stand to one another.

(beams) and stones mentioned after וַיָּכִינוּ. וְהַגִּבְלִים is to be taken as explanatory, "even the Giblites," giving a more precise definition of "Hiram's builders." The Giblites are the inhabitants of the town of *Gebal,* called Byblos by the Greeks, to the north of Beirut (see at Josh. xiii. 5), which was the nearest to the celebrated cedar forest of the larger Phœnician towns. According to Ezek. xxvii. 9, the Giblites (Byblians) were experienced in the art of shipbuilding, and therefore were probably skilful builders generally, and as such the most suitable of Hiram's subjects to superintend the working of the wood and stone for Solomon's buildings. For it was in the very nature of the case that the number of the Phœnician builders was only a small one, and that they were merely the foremen; and this may also be inferred from the large number of his own subjects whom Solomon appointed to the work.[1]

CHAP. VI. BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE.

The account of the building of the temple commences with a statement of the date of the building (ver. 1); and this is followed by a description of the plan and size of the temple-house (vers. 2–10), to which there is also appended the divine promise made to Solomon during the erection of the building (vers. 11–13). After this we have a further account of the internal fittings and decorations of the sanctuary (vers. 14–36), and in ch. vii. 1–12 a description of the royal palace which was built after the temple; and, finally, a description of the pillars of the court which were executed in metal by the Tyrian artist, and of the different vessels of the temple (ch. vii. 13–51).[1] We have a parallel to this in 2 Chron. iii. and iv., though here the description is differently arranged. In the Chronicles the external building of the temple-house is not separated from the internal decoration and furnishing; but after the period of erection and the size of the temple-house have been given in ch. iii. 1–3, there follows a description, *a.* of the court (ver. 4); *b.* of the Holy Place with its internal decorations (vers. 5–7); *c.* of the Most Holy Place, with special reference to its size and decorations, also of the colossal cherubim placed therein and the curtain in front of it, which is not mentioned in our account (vers. 8–14); *d.* of the brazen pillars in front of the court (vers. 15–17); *e.* of the altar of burnt-offering (ch. iv. 1), which is passed over in the account before us; *f.* of the brazen sea (vers. 2–5); *g.* of the brazen lavers, the golden candlesticks, the tables of shewbread, and the golden basons (vers. 6–8); and *h.* of the courts (ver. 9). The account is then closed with a summary enumeration of the different vessels of the temple (vers. 10–22), which agrees almost word for word with 1 Kings vii. 40–50.

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[1] Without any satisfactory ground Thenius has taken offence at the word וְהַגִּבְלִים, and on the strength of the critically unattested *καὶ ἔβαλον αὐτούς* of the LXX. and the paraphrastic *ἁρμόσαντας καὶ συνδήσαντας* of Josephus, which is only introduced to fill in the picture, has altered it into וַיַּגְבִּילֻם, "they bordered them (the stones)." This he explains as relating to the "bevelling" of the stones, upon the erroneous assumption that the grooving of the stones in the old walls encircling the temple area, which Robinson (*Pal.* i. 423) was the first to notice and describe, "occurs nowhere else in precisely the same form;" whereas Robinson found them in the ancient remains of the foundations of walls in different places throughout the land, not only in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, viz. at Bethany, but also at Carmel on the mountains of Judah, at Hebron, Semua (Esthemoa), Beit Nusib (Nezib), on Tabor, and especially in the north, in the old remains of the walls of the fortifications *es Shukif, Hunîn, Banias, Tyrus, Jebail* (Byblus), *Baalbek,* on the island of *Ruwad* (the ancient *Aradus*), and in different temples on Lebanon (see Rob. *Pal.* ii. 101, 198, 434, 627; iii. 12, 213, 214; and *Bibl. Researches,* p. 229). Böttcher (*n. ex. Krit. Aehrenl.* ii. p. 32) has therefore properly rejected this conjecture as "ill-founded," though only to put in its place another which is altogether unfounded, namely, that before וְהַגִּבְלִים the word

Vers. 1–10. THE OUTSIDE OF THE BUILDING.—Ver. 1. The building of the temple, a fixed and splendid house of Jehovah as

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הַצֹּרִים ("the Tyrians") has dropped out. For this has nothing further in its favour than the most improbable assumption, that king Hiram gathered together the subjects of his whole kingdom to take part in Solomon's buildings.—The addition of *τρία ἔτη*, which is added by the LXX. at the end of the verse, does not warrant the assumption of Thenius and Böttcher, that שָׁלֹשׁ שָׁנִים has dropped out of the text. For it is obvious that the LXX. have merely made their addition *e conjectura*, and indeed have concluded that, as the foundation for the temple was laid in the fourth year of Solomon's reign, the preliminary work must have occupied the first three years of his reign.

[1] Of the special works on the subject of the temple, see my pamphlet, *Der Tempel Salomo's, eine archäologische Untersuchung* (Dorp. 1839); and Carl Chr. W. F. Bähr, *Der Salomonische Tempel mit Berücksichtigung seines Verhältnisses zur heil. Architectur überhaupt* (Karlsr. 1848). In both of these there are critical notices of the earlier investigations and monographs on this subject, which have now simply a historical interest. See also the short description of the temple in my *Bibl. Archäologie*, i. § 23 sqq., with sketches of the temple building and the principal vessels on Plates 2 and 3, and the most recent notice by H. Merz in Herzog's *Cyclopædia* (Art. *Temple*).

the dwelling-place of His name in the midst of His people, formed an important epoch so far as the Old Testament kingdom of God was concerned, inasmuch as, according to the declaration of God made through the prophet Nathan, an end would thereby be put to the provisional condition of the people of Israel in the land of Canaan, since the temple was to become a substantial pledge of the permanent possession of the inheritance promised by the Lord. The importance of this epoch is indicated by the fact, that the time when the temple was built is defined not merely in relation to the year of Solomon's reign, but also in relation to the exodus of the Israelites out of Egypt. "In the 480th year after the exodus of the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign, in the second month of the year, Solomon built the house of the Lord." The correctness of the number 480, as contrasted with the 440th year of the LXX. and the different statements made by Josephus, is now pretty generally admitted; and we have already proved at Judg. iii. 7 that it agrees with the duration of the period of the Judges when rightly estimated.[1] The name of the month *Ziv*, brilliancy, splendour, probably so called from the splendour of the flowers, is explained by the clause, "that is, the second month," because the months had no fixed names before the captivity, and received different names after the captivity. The second month was called *Jyar* after the captivity.—The place where the temple was built is not given in our account, as having been sufficiently well known; though it is given in the parallel text, 2 Chron. iii. 1, namely, "Mount *Moriah*, where the Lord had appeared to David" at the time of the pestilence, and where David had built an altar of burnt-offering by divine command (see at 2 Sam. xxiv. 25).

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[1] In opposition to the hypothesis of Böttcher, which has been repeated by Bertheau, viz. that the number 480 merely rests upon the computation of 12 × 40 years, or twelve generations of forty years each, Thenius himself has observed with perfect justice, that "where both the year and the month of the reign of the king in question are given, the principal number will certainly rest upon something more than mere computation; and if this had not been the case, the person making such a computation, if only for the purpose of obtaining the appearance of an exact statement, would have made a particular calculation of the years of Solomon's reign, and would have added them to the round number obtained, and written 'in the year 484.' Moreover, the introduction to our chapter has something annalistic in its tone; and at this early period it would be undoubtedly well known, and in a case like the present a careful calculation would be made, how long a time had elapsed since the most memorable period of the Israelitish nation had passed by." Compare with this Ed. Preuss (*Die Zeitrechnung der LXX.*, p. 74 sqq.), who has endeavoured with much greater probability to show that the alteration made by the LXX. into 440 rests upon nothing more than a genealogical combination.

Vers. 2–4. *Plan and dimensions of the temple-house.*—The measures of the temple-house and its several subdivisions are all given in the clear, *i.e.* as the spaces were seen. The *house, i.e.* the main building of the temple (lit. as for the house, or shell of the building), its length was sixty cubits, its breadth twenty cubits, and its height thirty cubits, and that, according to 2 Chron. iii. 3, "after the earlier measure," *i.e.* after the old Mosaic or sacred cubit, which was a hand-breadth longer, according to Ezek. xl. 5 and xliii. 13, than the civil cubit of the time of the captivity. The Mosaic cubit, according to the investigations of Thenius, was 214,512 Parisian lines long, *i.e.* 20½ Dresden inches, or 18½ Rhenish inches (see at Gen. vi. 10).—Ver. 3. The *porch* (lit. *hall*) in the face of (עַל־פְּנֵי, *i.e.* before) the Holy Place of the house was twenty cubits long, before (עַל־פְּנֵי) the breadth of the house, *i.e.* it was just the same breadth as the house. The longer line, which ran parallel to the breadth of the house, is called here אֹרֶךְ, the length, though from our point of view we should call it the width. And ten cubits was its breadth, *i.e.* its depth in front of the house. The height of the court is not given in our text; but in 2 Chron. iii. 4 it is said to have been 120 cubits. This is certainly an error, although Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 300) still joins with Stieglitz (*Baukunst*, p. 126, and *Beitrr. zur Gesch. der Bauk.* i. p. 70) in defending its correctness. For an erection of such a height as this could not possibly have been designated as אוּלָם (a hall or porch), but would have been called מִגְדָּל, a *tower.* But even a tower of 120 cubits in height in front of a temple which was only thirty cubits high, would have shown a greater disproportion than our loftiest church towers;[1] and such a funnel-like erection with a base of only ten cubits in breadth or depth would hardly have possessed sufficient stability. We cannot certainly think of an intentional exaggeration of the height in the Chronicles, since the other measures agree with the account before us; but the assumption that there has been a corruption of the text is rendered natural enough by many other errors in the numerical statements. This still leaves it undecided whether the true height was twenty or thirty cubits; for whereas the Syriac, Arabic, and LXX. (Cod. Al.) have twenty cubits, the height of thirty cubits is favoured partly by the omission of any statement of the height from our text, which is much easier to explain if the porch was of the same height as the temple-house than if the heights were different, and partly by the circumstance that the side building had an external height of twenty cubits, and therefore the porch would not have stood out with any especial prominence if its elevation had been just the same.—Ver. 4. After the account of the proportionate spaces in the temple-house, the windows through which it received light and air are mentioned. חַלּוֹנֵי שְׁקֻפִים אֲטֻמִים does not mean *fenestræ intus latæ, foris angustæ* (Chald., Ar., Rabb., Luther, and others), but windows with closed beams, *i.e.* windows the lattice-work of which could not be opened and closed at pleasure, as in ordinary dwelling-houses (2 Kings xiii. 17; Dan. vi. 11). For שְׁקֻפִים signifies beams overlaid in ch. vii. 4, and שֶׁקֶף beams in ch. vii. 5. The opening of the windows was probably narrower without than within, as in the older Egyptian buildings, as the walls were very strong; and in that case such windows would more thoroughly answer their purpose, viz. to admit light and air, and let out the smoke, so that the interpretation given by the Chaldee is most likely founded upon an ancient tradition, and is in accordance with the fact, though not with the words. It is a disputed point among the commentators where the windows were placed: whether merely in the front over the porch, provided, that is to say, that this was ten cubits lower than the temple-house, or on the side walls above the side stories, which were at the most about twenty cubits high, in which case the Most Holy Place, which was only twenty cubits high, remained quite dark, according to ch. viii. 12. We regard the latter view as the correct one, inasmuch as the objections to it rest upon assumptions which can be proved to be false.

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[1] In the Strasburg cathedral and that at Freiburg in Breisgau the proportion between the height of the tower and that of the church, together with the roof, is about 3¼ to 1; it is only in the cathedral at Rouen that the proportion would have been almost 4 to 1 if it had been carried out to the very top. At the same time, in making this comparison it must be borne in mind that these Gothic towers taper off into slender points, whereas in the case of Solomon's temple we must assume that if the porch was carried up to the height supposed, it finished in a flat truncated tower; and it is this which would chiefly occasion the disproportion.

Vers. 5–8. *The side building.*—Ver. 5. "He built against the wall of the house an outwork round about (*i.e.* against the two longer sides and against the hinder wall, and not against the front also, where the porch was built), against the walls of the house round about, against the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies, and he made side chambers round about." יָצוּעַ (written constantly יָצִיעַ in the *Keri*) signifies literally *stratum*, here the lower building or outwork erected against the rooms mentioned. The word is *gen. comm.*, but so construed that the masculine is used in a collective sense to denote the whole of the outworks, consisting as they did of three stories, whereas the feminine is used for one single story of the building (ver. 6). On this use of the masculine and feminine genders to distinguish the whole mass and the individual parts, which is very common in Arabic, though it is rare in Hebrew, in which the distinction is generally expressed by a peculiar feminine form, as for example אֳנִי a fleet, and אֳנִיָּה a single ship, compare Ewald, *Lehrbuch der hebr. Spr.* § 175, *d*, and 176, *a*, and *gramm. crit. ling. arab.* i. § 295. אֶת־קִירוֹת does not mean *cum parietibus* (Seb. Schmidt and J. H. Michaelis), but אֶת is a sign of the accusative, "as for the walls," and introduces the more precise definition. צְלָעוֹת signifies, both here and in Ezek. xli. 6 sqq., side chambers or side stories, from צָלַע, to incline to one side, hence to limp, *i.e.* to lean constantly to one side. From this there were derived for צֵלָע the meanings side, side piece or side wall, *e.g.* of the ark, Ex. xxv. 12, 14, etc., of the dwelling, Ex. xxvi. 20, 26, etc., of the altar, Ex. xxvii. 7, 30, etc., the side wall or slope of a mountain, 2 Sam. xvi. 13, the side portion of the human body, *i.e.* the rib, Gen. ii. 21, 22, the sides or leaves of a door in ver. 34 of the present chapter, and when used of buildings, the side pieces or portions built out which lean against the main building; and lastly, the idea of a piece which shows a large side, *i.e.* a broad plank (ch. vi. 15, 16). The meaning planks or beams, as it were ribs or rib-work, is unfounded.—Ver. 6. The (internal) breadth of the lower side story was five cubits, that of the middle one six, and that of the third seven cubits; "for he (they) had made shortenings (*i.e.* rebates) against the house round about on the outside, that (there might be) no insertion into the walls of the (temple-) house." The meaning is that rebates were attached against the temple wall, at the point where the lower beams of the different side stories were to be placed, so that the heads of these beams rested upon the rebates and were not inserted in the actual wall of the temple-house. These rebates are called very descriptively מִגְרָעוֹת, deductions or contractions of the thickness of the wall. We may assume that there were four such rebates: three for the three floors of the side stories, and one for the roof. It still remains doubtful, however, whether these rebates were merely laid along the temple wall, or along the outer wall of the side building as well, so as to ensure symmetry and make each of the two walls half a cubit thinner or weaker at every rebate. The former is the more probable. And accordingly the temple wall was one cubit weaker at each rebate, that is to say, in four places. If, therefore, it still remained two cubits thick at the top, it must have been six cubits thick below. This extraordinary thickness, however, would be quite in keeping with the remains of buildings of great antiquity, the walls of which have generally a colossal thickness, and also with the size of the square stones of which the wall was constructed, as described in ch. vii. 10. —Ver. 7 contains a circumstantial clause, inserted as an explanation of ver. 6: "The house, (namely) when building, was built of perfectly finished stones of the quarry, and hammer and axe; no kind of instrument whatever was heard at the house when it was building." אֶבֶן שְׁלֵמָה מַסָּע (on the construction see Ges. § 114, 1, Erl., and Ewald, § 339, *b*) does not mean stones quite unhewn, which God had so caused to grow that they did not require to be hewn (Theodoret); for although אֲבָנִים שְׁלֵמוֹת is used in Deut. xxvii. 6 (compare with Ex. xx. 25) to signify uninjured, *i.e.* unhewn stones, yet this meaning is precluded here by the context (cf. v. 32). שָׁלֵם signifies finished here, that is to say, stones which were so perfectly tooled and prepared when first broken in the quarry, that when the temple walls were built no iron instruments were required to prepare them any further. גַּרְזֶן, an axe, here a stone-mason's cutting tool corresponding to the axe.—In ver. 8 the description of the side building is continued. "A door (פֶּתַח, an opening for the entrance) to the middle side chamber (of the lower story) was on the right side (the southern side) of the house, and a winding staircase led up into the middle (room of the middle story) and out of the middle into the third rooms," *i.e.* the rooms of the third story. This is the rendering according to the Masoretic text; and the only thing that appears strange is the use of הַתִּיכֹנָה first of all for the middle room of the lower story and then for the middle story; and the conjecture is a very natural one, that the first הַתִּיכֹנָה may have been an error of the pen for הַתַּחְתֹּנָה, in which case הַצֵּלָע does not signify the side room, but is used in a collective sense for the row of side rooms in one story, as in Ezek. xli. 5, 9, 11. That this door was made from the outside, *i.e.* in the outer wall of the side building, and did not lead into the side rooms "from the interior of the Holy Place," would hardly need a remark, if Böttcher (*Proben alttestl. Schrifterkl.* p. 339) and Schnaase (*Gesch. der bildenden Künste*, Bd. 1) had not really supported this view, which is so thoroughly irreconcilable with the dignity of the sanctuary.[1] The only question is, whether it was made in the middle of the right side or in the front by the side of the porch. If the Masoretic text is correct, there is no doubt about the former. But if we read הַתַּחְתֹּנָה, the text leaves the question undecided. The winding staircase was not constructed in the outer wall itself, because this was not thick enough for the purpose, and the text states pretty clearly that it led from the lower story into the middle one, and thence still higher, so that it was in the centre of the building.

In vers. 9 and 10 the description of the exterior of the temple building is brought to a close. "So he built the house, and finished it, and covered the house with beams and boards of cedar." וַיִּסְפֹּן is not to be understood as relating to the internal panelling of the temple-house, for this is spoken of first in the section which follows (ver. 15), but to the roofing; סָפַן means to conceal (Deut. xxxiii. 21) and cover in all the other passages, even in Hag. i. 4 and Jer. xxii. 14, where סָפוּן is generally, though incorrectly, translated "panelled." As a verb signifying clothing, it is construed with the accusative. גֵּבִים does not mean boards, but beams, though not "an arched covering" (Thenius), because beams cut in the form of an arch would have been too weak in the middle, nor yet rafters (Böttcher), because the roofs of oriental buildings are flat. שְׂדֵרֹת בָּאֲרָזִים, "rows, *i. e.* tablets (consisting) of cedars," *i. e.* cedar tablets, which were inserted in rows between the beams. This cedar-work was certainly provided with a strong covering to protect the roof and the building itself against rain; and at the sides it had no doubt a parapet, as in the case of dwelling-houses (Deut. xxii. 8).—

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[1] The perfectly groundless assumption of Thenius, that the outer building had most probably an inner door as well, which connected it with the temple, does just as much violence to the decorum of the Holy Place.

Ver. 10. "And he built the outbuildings to the whole house (*i.e.* all round the temple-house, with the exception of the front: see ver. 5); five cubits was its height," *i.e.* the height of each story, the suffix in קוֹמָתוֹ being made to agree with הַיָּצִיעַ through an inaccuracy which has arisen from condensation, although, as in ver. 5, it denotes the whole of the side buildings, which consisted of three stories. The height given must also be understood as referring to the height within. Consequently the side buildings had an internal height of 3 × 5 cubits, and reckoning the floorings and the roof of the whole building an external height of 18 or 20 cubits; so that the temple-house, which was thirty cubits high within and about thirty-two without, rose about twelve or fourteen cubits above the side building, and there was plenty of room for the windows in the side walls. וַיֶּאֱחֹז וגו׳: "and it (the side building) held to the house with cedar beams." The meaning is, that the building was fastened to the house by the joists of the cedar beams belonging to the different stories, which rested upon rebates of the temple wall, so that it was firmly attached to the temple-house, without any injurious insertions into the sanctuary itself. This is apparently the only explanation, that can be grammatically sustained, of words that have received such different interpretations. For the translation given by Thenius, which coincides with this,—viz. "he fastened it (each separate story of the building) to the temple-house with cedar wood, namely, with the cedar beams which formed the flooring and roofing of the three stories,"—is exposed to this grammatical objection, that the suffix is wanting in יֶאֱחֹז, and that אָחַז is never followed by אֵת in the sense of *with.* All the other explanations are unsuitable. יֶאֱחֹז signifies neither "he covered the house" (Chald., Vulg., Luther), nor "he overlaid the house;" moreover, the roofing of the house has been already mentioned in ver. 9, and there is no trace to be found of any overlaying or covering of the outside with cedar wood.

If, therefore, we reckon the thickness of the temple wall at six cubits, and that of the outer wall of the side building and the front wall of the porch at three cubits each, the whole building would be ninety-three cubits long (externally) and forty-eight cubits broad. The height of the temple-house was about thirty-two cubits externally, and that of the side stories from eighteen to twenty cubits, without the socle upon which the whole building rested. This is not mentioned indeed, as being a subordinate matter, but would certainly not be omitted.[1] The number of rooms in the side buildings is not given, but may be set down at thirty in each story, if their length corresponded to their breadth in the lower story. These rooms had of course windows, although they are not mentioned in the account, but each one would have only a small window sufficient to give it the requisite light. And as to the number of the temple windows also, we can simply make conjectures. We can hardly assume that there were more than six on each side, and there were probably none at the back.

Vers. 11–13. PROMISE OF GOD DURING THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE.—In what way this promise was communicated to Solomon is not more precisely stated. But the expression "And the word of Jehovah came" seems to point to a prophetic medium. And this is in harmony with ch. ix. 2, according to which Jehovah only revealed Himself to Solomon twice by an actual appearance. —Ver. 12. הַבַּיִת וגו׳ is placed at the head absolutely: "As for the house which thou art building (בֹּנֶה, a participle), if thou walkest in my statutes, . . . I will set up my word, which I spake to thy father David." The reference is to the promise in 2 Sam. vii. 12 sqq. of the everlasting establishment of his throne. God would fulfil this for Solomon if he would walk in the commandments of the Lord, as his father had already urged upon him when he handed over the kingdom (ch. ii. 3). The promise in ver. 13, "I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel," does not contain a second promise added to the one given in 2 Sam. vii. 12 sqq., but simply a special application of it to the building of the temple which had already been commenced. The eternal establishment of the throne of David involved the dwelling of God among His people, or rather is founded upon it. This dwelling of God is now to receive a new and lasting realization. The temple is to be a pledge that the Lord will maintain for His people His covenant of grace and His gracious presence. In this respect the promise, "I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel, and not forsake my people Israel," is a confirmation of the word which Jehovah had spoken to David, although, so far as the actual words are concerned, it is more closely connected with Lev. xxvi. 11, when the highest blessing attendant upon the faithful observance of the commandments of God is summed up in the promise, "I will make my abode among you, and my soul will not despise you."

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[1] Thenius, on the other hand, reckons the length of the whole building at a hundred cubits and its breadth at fifty-two, because, on the unfounded assumption that the temple in Ezekiel's vision was simply a copy of Solomon's temple, he sets down the thickness of the temple wall in front and along the two sides at six cubits, and that of the hinder wall at seven. Moreover, he not only reckons the internal length of the house at sixty-two cubits, in opposition to the statement in the text, that the length of the house (which was divided into the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies) was sixty cubits; but in opposition to ver. 16, according to which the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies were separated by boards of cedar, he assumes that there was a wall of two cubits in thickness between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies, according to Ezek. xli. 3; and, lastly, for no other reason than the wish to get the round number 100, he takes for granted that the hinder wall of the temple was a cubit thicker than that on the other sides.

Vers. 14–35. THE INTERNAL ARRANGEMENTS OF THE TEMPLE-HOUSE.—Vers. 14–22. *Internal covering of the house, and division into Holy and Most Holy.*—Ver. 14 (cf. ver. 9) resumes the description of the building of the temple, which had been interrupted by the divine promise just communicated.—Ver. 15. "He built (*i.e.*, so far as the sense is concerned, he covered) the walls of the house within with boards of cedar; from the floor of the house to the walls of the ceiling he overlaid it with wood within, and overlaid the floor with cypress boards." The expression קִירוֹת הַסִּפֻּן, "walls of the ceiling," is very striking here, and renders it probable that קִירוֹת is only a copyist's error for קוֹרוֹת, "beams of the ceiling." The whole of the inside of the house was covered with wood, so that nothing was to be seen of the stone wall (ver. 18). On the other hand, the biblical text knows nothing of any covering of the outer walls also with wood, as many have assumed.—Vers. 16, 17. "And he built אֶת־עֶשְׂרִים אַמָּה, the twenty cubits (*i.e.* the space of twenty cubits), of the hindermost side of the house with boards of cedar," from the floor to the beams (of the roof). עַד־הַקִּירוֹת is to be explained from עַד קִירוֹת הַסִּפֻּן in ver. 15. "And built them for it (the house—לוֹ pointing back to הַבַּיִת) into the hinder room, into the Most Holy." דְּבִיר is more precisely defined by the apposition קֹדֶשׁ הַקֳּדָשִׁים, and therefore denotes the Most Holy Place. But there is a doubt as to its derivation and true meaning. Aquila and Symmachus render it χρηματιστήριον, Jerome λαλητήριον, or in the Vulg. *oraculum*, so that they derive it from דָּבַר, to speak; and Hengstenberg adopts this derivation in Ps. xxviii. 2: דְּבִיר, lit. that which is spoken, then the place where the speaking takes place. Most of the more recent commentators, on the other hand, follow the example of C. B. Michaelis and J. Simonis, and render it, after the Arabic, the hinder portion or back room, which is favoured by the antithesis הֵיכָל לִפְנַי, the front sanctuary (ver. 17). The words of the text, moreover, are not to be understood as referring to a cedar wall in front of the Most Holy Place which rose to the height of twenty cubits, but to all four walls of the Most Holy Place, so that the wall which divided the hinder room from the Holy Place is not expressly mentioned, simply because it is self-evident. The words also imply that the *whole* of the hinder space of the house to the length of twenty cubits was cut off for the Most Holy Place, and therefore the party wall must also have filled the whole height of the house, which was as much as thirty cubits, and reached, as is expressly stated, from the floor to the roof. There remained therefore forty cubits of the house (in length) for הֵיכָל לִפְנַי, the front palace, *i.e.* the Holy Place of the temple (ver. 17). לִפְנַי, *anterior*, formed from לִפְנֵי (cf. Ewald, § 164, *a*).—In ver. 18 there is inserted in a circumstantial clause the statement as to the internal decoration of both rooms; and the further description of the Most Holy Place is given in vers. 19 sqq. "And cedar wood was (placed) against the house inside, sculpture of gourds (*colocynthides*) and open buds." מִקְלַעַת is in apposition to אֶרֶז, containing a more minute description of the nature of the covering of cedar. מִקְלַעַת signifies sculpture, half-raised work (*basso relievo*); not, however, "that kind of bas-relief in which the figures, instead of rising above the surface on which they are wrought, are simply separated from it by the chiselling out of their outlines, and their being then rounded off according to these outlines" (Thenius). For although the expression פִּתּוּחֵי מִקְלָעוֹת (ver. 29) appears to favour this, yet "merely engraved work" does not harmonize with the decorations of the brazen stands in ch. vii. 31, which are also called מִקְלָעוֹת. פְּקָעִים are figures resembling the פַּקֻּעֹת, or wild gourds (2 Kings iv. 39), *i.e.* oval ornaments, probably running in straight rows along the walls. פְּטוּרֵי צִצִּים are open flower-buds; not hangings or garlands of flowers (Thenius), for this meaning cannot be derived from פָּטַר in the sense of loosening or setting free, so as to signify flowers loosened or set free (= garlands), which would be a marvellous expression! The objection that, "according to Num. xvii. 23, flowers not yet opened, *i.e.* flower-buds, were not צִצִּים, but פְּרָחִים," rests upon a false interpretation of the passage referred to.—Ver. 19. "And (= namely) he prepared a hinder room in the house within, to place the ark of the covenant of Jehovah there." תִּתֵּן, as ch. xvii. 14 shows, is not a future (*ut reponeres*), but the infinitive תֵּת with a repeated syllable תֵּן (see Ewald, § 238, *c*).—Ver. 20. "And the interior of the hinder room was twenty cubits the length, twenty cubits the breadth, and twenty cubits its height." The word לִפְנֵי I agree with Kimchi in regarding as the construct state of the noun לִפְנִים, which occurs again in ver. 29 in the sense of the inner part or interior, as is evident from the antithesis לַחִיצוֹן (on the outside). "And he overlaid it with fine gold." זָהָב סָגוּר (= סְגוֹר in Job xxviii. 15) unquestionably signifies fine or costly gold, although the derivation of this meaning is still questionable; viz. whether it is derived from סָגַר in the sense of to shut up, *i.e.* gold shut up or carefully preserved, after the analogy of כֶּתֶם; or is used in the sense of taking out or selecting, *i.e.* gold selected or pure; or in the sense of closed, *i.e.* gold condensed or unadulterated (Fürst and Delitzsch on Job xxviii. 15).

The Most Holy Place had therefore the form of a perfect cube in the temple as well as in the tabernacle, only on an enlarged scale. Now, as the internal elevation of the house, *i.e.* of the whole of the temple-house, the hinder portion of which formed the Most Holy Place, was thirty cubits, there was a space of about ten cubits in height above the Most Holy Place and below the roof of the temple-house for the upper rooms mentioned in 2 Chron. iii. 9, on the nature and purpose of which nothing is said in the two accounts.[1] "And he overlaid (clothed) the altar with cedar wood." There is something very striking in the allusion to the altar in this passage, since the verse itself treats simply of the Most Holy Place; and still more striking is the expression הַמִּזְבֵּחַ אֲשֶׁר לַדְּבִיר, "the altar belonging to the *Debir*," in ver. 22, since there was no altar in the Most Holy

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[1] This upper room does not presuppose, however, that the party wall, which follows as a matter of course from ver. 16, was not merely a cedar wall, but a wall two cubits thick. The supposed difficulty of setting up a cedar wall thirty cubits high is not so great as to necessitate assumptions opposed to the text. For we cannot possibly see why it could not have been made secure "without injuring the temple wall." The wood panelling must have been nailed firmly to the wall without injuring the wall itself; and therefore this could be done just as well in the case of the cedar beams or boards of the party wall.

Place. We cannot remove the strangeness of these sentences by such alterations as Thenius and Böttcher propose, because the alterations suggested are much too complicated to appear admissible. The allusion to the altar in both these verses is rather to be explained from the statements in the Pentateuch as to the position of the altar of incense; viz. Ex. xxx. 6, "Thou shalt place it before the curtain, which is above the ark of the testimony before the capporeth over the testimony;" and Ex. xl. 5, "before the ark of the testimony;" whereby this altar, although actually standing "before the inner curtain," *i.e.* in the Holy Place, according to Ex. xl. 26, was placed in a closer relation to the Most Holy Place than the other two things which were in the Holy Place. The clothing of the altar with cedar presupposes that it had a heart of stone; and the omission of the article before מִזְבֵּחַ may be explained on the ground that it is mentioned here for the first time, just as in ver. 16, where דְּבִיר was first mentioned, it had no article.—Ver. 21. To the gilding of the Most Holy Place, and the allusion to the altar of incense, which in a certain sense belonged to it, there is now appended in ver. 21 the gilding of the Holy Place. "Solomon overlaid the house from within with fine gold." הַבַּיִת מִפְּנִימָה cannot be the party wall between the Holy Place and the Most Holy, as I formerly supposed, but is the Holy Place as distinguished from the Most Holy. The following words וַיְעַבֵּר וגו׳ are very obscure. If we rendered them, "he caused to pass over in (with) golden chains before the hinder room," we could only think of an ornament consisting of golden chains, which ran along the wall in front of the hinder room and above the folding doors. But this would be very singularly expressed. We must therefore take עַבֵּר, as Gesenius, de Wette, and many of the earlier commentators do, according to the Chaldæan usage in the sense of bolting or fastening: "he bolted (fastened) with golden chains before the hinder room;" and must assume with Merz and others that the doors into the Most Holy Place (except on the day of atonement) were closed and fastened with golden chains, which were stretched across the whole breadth of the door and stood out against the wall.[1]—The following expression, וַיְצַפֵּהוּ זָהָב, "and he overlaid it with gold," can only refer to the altar mentioned in the previous verse, the gilding of which has not yet been noticed, however surprising the separation of these words from ver. 20 may be.—In ver. 22 what has already been stated with regard to the gilding is repeated once more in a comprehensive manner, which brings this subject to a close. The whole house (כָּל־הַבַּיִת) is the Holy Place and the Most Holy, but not the porch or hall, as this is expressely distinguished from the house. הַמִּזְבֵּחַ, the whole altar, not merely a portion of it.

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[1] The conjecture of Thenius, that אֶת־הַפָּרֹכֶת (the curtain) has dropped out of the text and should be restored ("he carried the curtain across with golden chains"), is very properly described by Merz as "certainly untenable," since, apart from the fact that not one of the older versions contains

Vers. 23–28. *The large cherub-figures in the Most Holy Place.*—Ver. 23. He made (caused to be made) in the hinder room two cherubs of olive wood, *i.e.* wood of the *oleaster* or wild olive-tree, which is very firm and durable, and, according to 2 Chron. iii. 10, מַעֲשֵׂה צַעֲצֻעִים, *i.e.*, according to the Vulgate, *opus statuarium*, a peculiar kind of sculpture, which cannot be more precisely defined, as the meaning of צַעַע is uncertain. "Ten cubits was the height of it" (*i.e.* of the one and of the other). The figures had a human form, like the golden cherubs upon the ark of the covenant, and stood upright upon their feet (2 Chron. iii. 13), with extended wings of five cubits in length, so that one wing of the one reached to one wing of the other in the centre of the room, and the other wing of each reached to the opposite wall, and consequently the four extended wings filled the entire breadth of the Most Holy Place (a breadth of twenty cubits), and the two cherubs stood opposite to one another and ten cubits apart. The wings were evidently fastened to the back and placed close to one another upon the shoulder-blades, so that the small space between their starting-points is not taken into consideration in the calculation of their length. The figures were completely overlaid with gold. The ark of the covenant was placed between these cherubs, and under the wings which pointed towards one another. As they were made like those upon the ark, they had evidently the same meaning, and simply served to strengthen the idea which was symbolized in the cherub, and which we have expounded in the Com-

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the missing words, chains would have impeded the moving of the curtain. It is true that, according to 2 Chron. iii. 14, there was a curtain before the Most Holy Place; but as it is not mentioned so early as this even in the Chronicles, this would not be its proper position in the account before us, but it would be most suitably mentioned either in connection with or after the reference to the doors of the Most Holy Place in vers. 31 and 32.

mentary on Ex. xxv. 20 sqq. Only their faces were not turned towards one another and bent down towards the ark, as in the case of the golden cherubim of the ark; but, according to 2 Chron. iii. 13, they were turned לַבַּיִת, towards the house, *i.e.* the Holy Place, so as to allow of the extension of the wings along the full length of the Most Holy Place.

Vers. 29–35. *Ornaments of the walls; the floors and doors.*—Ver. 29. All the walls of the house (the Holy Place and the Most Holy) round about (מֵסַב, adverb) he made engraved work (carving) of cherubs, palms, and open flowers from within to the outside (*i.e.* in the Most Holy as well as in the Holy Place). מִן . . אֶל = מִן . . וְלַ; and לִפְנִים as in ver. 20. This completes the account of the nature of the covering of wood. In addition to the oval figures and open flowers (ver. 18), there were also figures of cherubim and palm-trees carved in the wooden panels. Nothing is said as to the distribution of these figures. But a comparison with Ezek. xli. 18 shows at any rate so much, that the palm-trees alternated with the cherubs, so that there was always one cherub standing between two palm-trees. The gourd-shaped figures and the open flowers probably formed the upper and lower setting of the rows of palms and cherubs, the flowers hanging in the form of garlands above the palms and cherubs, and the rows of gourds arranged in bars constituting the boundary lines both above and below. It is a disputed question whether there was only one row of palms and cherubs running round the walls, or whether there were two, or possibly even three. There is more probability in the second or third of these assumptions than in the first, inasmuch as on the walls of the Egyptian temples there were often three or four rows of mythological characters in relief arranged one above another (compare my work on the Temple, pp. 70 sqq.).—Ver. 30. The floor of the house he overlaid with gold within and without, *i.e.* in the Most Holy Place and in the Holy Place also.—Vers. 31, 32. He made the entrance to the back room, doors (*i.e.* consisting of doors; cf. Ewald, § 284, *a*, *β*) of olive wood, which moved, according to ch. vii. 50, on golden hinges. הָאַיִל וגו׳, "the projection of the door-posts was a fifth" (מְזוּזוֹת is construed freely as an explanatory apposition to הָאַיִל, to which it is really subordinate; cf. Ewald, § 290, *e*). These obscure words, which have been interpreted in very different ways (see Ges. *Thes.* pp. 43 sq.), can hardly have any other meaning than this: the projecting framework of the doors occupied the fifth part of the breadth of the wall. For the explanation given by Böttcher and Thenius, "the entrance framework with posts of fifth strength," has no real support in Ezek. xli. 3. To justify the rendering given to חֲמִשִׁית (fifth strength), הָאַיִל is supplied, though not in the sense of projection, but in the thoroughly unwarranted sense of strength or thickness of the wall; and in addition to this, a wall two cubits thick is postulated between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place, in direct contradiction to ver. 16. The further evidence, which Thenius finds in ch. viii. 8, in support of this explanation, has been already rejected by Böttcher as unsustained. It would indeed be extremely strange for the thickness of the door-posts which formed the setting of the entrance to be given, whereas nothing is said about the size of the doors. According to our explanation, "a fifth of the breadth of the wall," the entrance was four cubits broad including the projecting door-posts, and each of the two wings of the folding doors about a cubit and a half broad, if we reckon the projecting framework on either side at half a cubit in breadth.—Ver. 32. "And two doors (*i.e.* folding doors, *sc.* he made; וּשְׁתֵּי is also governed by עָשָׂה in ver. 31) of olive wood, and carved upon them carved work," etc., as upon the walls (ver. 29), "and overlaid them with gold, spreading the gold upon the cherubs and palms" (יָרֶד, *hiphil* of רָדַד), *i.c.* he spread gold-leaf upon them, so that, as Rashi observes, all the figures, the elevations and depressions of the carved work, were impressed upon the coating of gold-leaf, and were thus plainly seen. Thenius infers from this explanatory clause, that the gilding upon the walls and doors was most probably confined to the figures engraved, and did not extend over the whole of the walls and doors, because, if the doors had been entirely overlaid with gold, the gilding of the carved work upon them would have followed as a matter of course. But this inference is a very doubtful one. For if it followed as a matter of course from the gilding of the entire doors that the carved work upon them was overlaid with gold, it would by no means follow that the overlaying was such as to leave the carved work visible or prominent, which this clause affirms. Moreover, a partial gilding of the walls would not coincide with the expression עַד־תֹּם כָּל־הַבַּיִת in ver. 22, since these words, which are used with emphasis, evidently affirm more than "that such (partial) gilding was carried out everywhere throughout the temple proper."

The doors in front of the Most Holy Place did not render the curtain mentioned in 2 Chron. iii. 14 unnecessary, as many suppose. This curtain may very well have been suspended within the doors; so that even when the doors were opened outwards on the entrance of the high priest, the curtain formed a second covering, which prevented the priests who were ministering in the Holy Place and court from looking in.[1]—Vers. 33, 34. "And thus he made upon the door of the Holy Place posts of olive wood from a fourth (of the wall)," *i.e.* a framework which occupied a fourth of the breadth of the wall, or was five cubits broad (see at ver. 31), "and two doors of cypress wood, two leaves each door turning," *i.e.* each of the folding doors consisting of two leaves, each of which was made to turn by itself, so that it could be opened and shut alone (without the other; קְלָעִים is probably only a copyist's error for צְלָעִים). Cypress wood was chosen for the folding doors of the Holy Place, and not olive wood, as in the case of the Most Holy Place, probably because it is lighter in weight, and therefore less likely to sink. It is questionable here what idea we are to form of the division of each folding door into two leaves, each of which turned by itself: whether we are to think of each wing as divided lengthwise into two narrow leaves, or as divided half way up, so that the lower half could be opened without the upper. I agree with Merz in thinking the latter the more probable assumption; for the objection made by Thenius, on the ground that doors of this kind are only seen in the houses of the peasantry, is an idle assertion which cannot be proved. In a doorway of five cubits in breadth, after reckoning the doorposts the width of the two wings could not be more than two cubits each. And if such a door had been divided into two halves, each half would have been only one cubit wide, so that when open it would not have furnished the requisite room for one man conveniently to pass through. On the other hand, we may assume that a folding door of four cubits in breadth, if made in just proportions, would be eight cubits high. And a door of such a height might easily be divided into two halves, so that only the lower half (of two cubits in breadth and about four in height) was opened for the daily entrance of the priests into the Holy Place. These doors probably opened outwards, like those in front of the Most Holy Place.—Ver. 35. Carving and gilding: as upon the doors before the hinder room. The gold was levelled or smoothed over that which had been engraved, *i.e.* it was beaten out thin and laid upon the carving in such a manner that the gold plate fitted closely to the figures. Gilding was generally effected in ancient times by the laying on of gold plate, which was fastened with tacks (compare 2 Chron. iii. 9).

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[1] H. Merz (Herzog's *Cycl.*) now admits this, whereas he formerly agreed with Ewald and others in denying the existence of the curtain in Solomon's temple, and regarded the curtain (veil) in Matt. xxvii. 51, 52 as an arbitrary addition made by Herod out of his princely caprice, thus overlooking the deep symbolical meaning which the veil or curtain possessed.

Ver. 36. *The courts.*—"He built the inner court three rows of hewn stones and one row of hewn cedar beams." The epithet inner court applied to the "court of the priests" (2 Chron. iv. 9) presupposes an outer one, which is also mentioned in 2 Chron. iv. 9, and called "the great court." The inner one is called the *upper* (higher) court in Jer. xxxvi. 10, from which it follows that it was situated on a higher level than the outer one, which surrounded it on all sides. It was enclosed by a low wall, consisting of three rows of hewn stones, or square stones, laid one upon another, and a row of hewn cedar beams, which were either laid horizontally upon the stones, after the analogy of the panelling of the temple walls on the inside, or placed upright so as to form a palisading, in order that the people might be able to see through into the court of the priests. According to 2 Chron. iv. 9, the outer court had gates lined with brass, so that it was also surrounded with a high wall. Around it there were chambers and cells (2 Kings xxiii. 11; Jer. xxxv. 4, xxxvi. 10) for the priests and Levites, the plans for which had already been made by David (1 Chron. xxviii. 12). The principal gate was the east gate (Ezek. xi. 1). Other gates are mentioned in 2 Kings xi. 6, 2 Chron. xxiii. 5, Jer. xx. 2, 2 Kings xii. 10, 2 Chron. xxiv. 8. The size of these courts is not given. At the same time, following the analogy of the tabernacle, and with the reduplication of the rooms of the tabernacle which is adopted in other cases in the temple, we may set down the length of the court of the priests from east to west at 200 cubits, and the breadth from south to north at 100 cubits; so that in front of the temple-building on the east there was a space of 100 cubits in length and breadth, or 10,000 square cubits, left free for the altar of burnt-offering and the other vessels, in other words, for the sacrificial worship. The outer or great court will therefore, no doubt, have been at least twice as large, namely, 400 cubits long and 200 cubits broad, *i.e.*, in all, 80,000 square cubits; so that the front space before the court of the priests (on the eastern side) was 150 cubits long from east to west, and 200 cubits broad from south to north, and 50 cubits in breadth or depth still remained for the other three sides.

Vers. 37, 38. *The time consumed in building.*—The foundation was laid in the fourth year in the month Ziv (see ver. 1), and it was finished in the eleventh year in the month *Bul, i.e.* the eighth month, so that it was built in seven years, or, more precisely, seven years and a half, "according to all its matters and all its due." בּוּל for יְבוּל signifies *proventus*; יֶרַח בּוּל is therefore the fruit month, the month of tree fruits. The name probably originated with the Phœnicians, with whom the fruit ripened later; and it is said to be found upon the great Sidonian inscription (compare Dietrich on Ges. *Lex. s.v.*). For other explanations see Ges. *Thes.* p. 560. In comparison with other large buildings of antiquity,[1] and also of modern times, the work was executed in a very short time. But we must bear in mind that the building was not a very large one, notwithstanding all its splendour; that an unusually large number of workmen were employed upon it; and that the preparation of the materials, more especially the hewing of the stones, took place at Lebanon, and for the most part preceded the laying of the foundation of the temple, so that this is not to be included in the seven years and a half. Moreover, the period mentioned probably refers to the building of the temple-house and court of the priests only, and to the general arrangement of the outer court, and does not include the completion of the underground works which were necessary to prepare the space required for them, and of which only a portion may have been carried out by Solomon.[2]

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[1] According to Pliny (*H. N.* 36, c. 14), all Asia was building at the celebrated temple of Diana at Ephesus for 220 years.

[2] The account given by Josephus of these substructures does not show very clearly how much originated with Solomon, and how much belongs to the following centuries. At the close of his description of Solomon's temple (*Ant.* viii. 3, 9), he states that, in order to obtain the same level for the ἔξωθεν ἱερόν, *i.e.* the outer court of the temple, as that of the ναός, he had large valleys filled up, into which it was difficult to look down on account of their depth, by raising the ground to the height of 400 cubits, so as to make them

The importance of the temple is clearly expressed in ch. viii. 13, 27, ix. 3, 2 Chron. vi. 2, and other passages. It was to be a house built as the dwelling-place for Jehovah, a place for His seat for ever; not indeed in any such sense as that the house could contain God within its space, when the heavens of heavens cannot contain Him (ch. viii. 27), but a house where the name of Jehovah is or dwells (ch. viii. 16 sqq.; 2 Chron. vi. 5; cf. 2 Sam. vii. 13, etc.), *i.e.* where God manifests His presence in

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level with the top of the mountain; and in the *de Bell. Jud.* v. 5, 1, after describing the temple-mountain as a mighty hill, the summit of which hardly sufficed for the temple-house and altar when the building was commenced, because it sloped off on all sides, he adds: "Solomon therefore caused a wall to be raised on the eastern side, and had a porch built upon the ground that was heaped up, and on the other sides the temple (ναός) was naked (γυμνός)." But in the description of the temple of Herod (*Ant.* xv. 11, 3) he says: "The temple was surrounded by enormous porticos (στοαί), which rested upon a large wall, and were the largest work of which men have ever heard. It was a steep rocky hill, rising gradually towards the eastern part of the city up to the highest point. This hill Solomon surrounded with a wall by very great works up to the very apex, and walled it round, commencing at the root, which is surrounded by a deep ravine, with stones which were fastened together with lead, . . . and continuing to the top, so that the size and height of the building, which was completed as a square, were immense," etc. The flat obtained in this manner is then described by Josephus as a περίβολος of four stadia in circumference, namely, one stadium on each side. Now, although it was the outer court of the temple of Herod (the court of the Gentiles) which first had this circumference (see my *bibl. Archäol.* i. pp. 143, 144), and Josephus, *de Bell. Jud.* v. 5, 1, relates that subsequently (τοῖς ἑξῆς αἰῶσιν) the levelling of the hill was carried out to even a greater extent, as the people still continued to heap up earth, it is quite conceivable that Solomon may have planned the area of the temple with this circumference. And this conjecture acquires great probability from the fact that, according to the researches of Robinson (*Pal.* i. pp. 420 sqq.; *Recent Investigations concerning the Topography of Jerusalem*, pp. 68 sqq.; and *Later Biblical Researches*, pp. 173 sqq.), there are layers of enormous square stones in the lowest part of the south-western and south-eastern corners of the present Haram wall, the dimensions of which, apart from the fact that they are hewn with grooved edges, point to an early Israelitish origin, so that they might very well be relics of the Solomonian substructures of the temple-hill. There is also the remnant of the arch of a bridge of the same construction on the southern portion of the western wall of the Haram, which points to a bridge that led across from Moriah to Zion, and "appears to remove all the objections to the identity of this part of the enclosure of the mosque with that of the ancient temple" (Rob. *Pal.* i. p. 426). "Here then," adds Robinson (*Pal.* i. pp. 427, 428), "we have indisputable remains of Jewish antiquity, consisting of an important portion of the western wall of a real manner to His people, and shows Himself to them as the covenant God, so that Israel may there worship Him and receive an answer to its prayers. The temple had therefore the same purpose as the tabernacle, whose place it took, and which it resembled in its fundamental form, its proportions, divisions, and furniture. As the glory of the Lord entered into the tabernacle in the cloud, so did it into the temple also at its dedication, to sanctify it as the place of the gracious presence of God (ch. viii.

the ancient temple area. They are probably to be referred to a period long antecedent to the days of Herod; for the labours of this splendour-loving tyrant appear to have been confined to the body of the temple and the porticos around the court. The magnitude of the stones also, and the workmanship, as compared with other remaining monuments of Herod, seem to point to an earlier origin. In the accounts we have of the destruction of the temple by the Chaldæans, and its rebuilding by Zerubbabel under Darius, no mention is made of these exterior walls. The former temple was destroyed by fire, which would not affect these foundations; nor is it probable that a feeble colony of returning exiles could have accomplished works like these. There seems, therefore, little room for hesitation in referring them back to the days of Solomon, or rather of his successors, who, according to Josephus, built up here immense walls, 'immoveable for all time.'"

But however probable this assumption may be, the successors of Solomon cannot come into consideration at all, since Josephus says nothing of the kind, and the biblical accounts are not favourable to this conjecture. With the division of the kingdom after the death of Solomon the might of the kings of Judah was broken; and the accounts of the new court which Jehoshaphat built, *i.e.* of the restoration of the inner court (2 Chron. xx. 5), and of the repairs of the temple by Joash (2 Kings xii. 5 sqq.; 2 Chron. xxiv. 4 sqq.) and Josiah (2 Kings xxii. 5 sqq.; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 8 sqq.), do not produce the impression that walls so costly or so large could have been built at that time. The statement of Josephus (*l.c. de Bell. Jud.* v. 5, 1) concerning the gradual extension of the levelled hill, has reference to the enlargement of the temple area towards the north, inasmuch as he adds to the words already quoted: "and cutting through the *north* wall, they took in as much as was afterwards occupied by the circumference of the whole temple."—If, therefore, the remains of the ancient wall which have been mentioned, with their stones of grooved edges, are of early Israelitish origin, we must trace them to Solomon; and this is favoured still further by the fact, that when Solomon had a magnificent palace built for himself opposite to the temple (see ch. vii. 1–12), he would assuredly connect the temple-mountain with Zion by a bridge.—Even J. Berggren (*Bibel u. Josephus über Jerus. u. d. heil. Grab.*) thinks it probable that "the so-called remains of an arch in the western Haram wall may be, as Robinson at first indicated, a relic of that ancient and marvellous xystus bridge, with which the Davidic steps on the two steep sides of the valley of the Tyropœum, constructed for the purpose of going from Moriah to Zion or from Zion to Moriah, were connected."

10; 2 Chron. v. 14). The temple thereby became not only a visible pledge of the lasting duration of the covenant, by virtue of which God would dwell among His people, but also a copy of the kingdom of God, which received at its erection an embodiment answering to its existing condition at the time. As the tabernacle, with its resemblance to a nomad's tent, answered to the time when Israel had not yet found rest in the promised land of the Lord; so was the temple, regarded as an immoveable house, a pledge that Israel had now acquired its lasting inheritance in Canaan, and that the kingdom of God on earth had obtained a firm foundation in the midst of it.—This relation between the temple and the tabernacle will serve to explain all the points of difference which present themselves between these two sanctuaries, notwithstanding their agreement in fundamental forms and in all essential particulars. As a house or palace of Jehovah, the temple was not only built of solid and costly materials, with massive walls of square stones, and with floors, ceilings, walls, and doors of cedar, cypress, and olive woods—these almost imperishable kinds of wood—but was also provided with a hall like the palaces of earthly kings, and with side buildings in three stories in which to keep the utensils requisite for a magnificent ceremonial, though care was taken that these adjoining and side buildings were not attached directly to the main building so as to violate the indestructibility and perfectness of the house of God, but merely helped to exalt it and elevate its dignity. And the increased size of the inner rooms, whilst the significant forms and measures of the tabernacle were preserved, was also essentially connected with this. Whereas the length and breadth of the dwelling were doubled, and the height of the whole house tripled, the form of a cube was still retained for the Most Holy Place as the stamp of the perfected kingdom of God (see *Comm. on Pent.* vol. ii. p. 184), and the space was fixed at twenty cubits in length, breadth, and height. On the other hand, in the case of the Holy Place the sameness of height and breadth were sacrificed to the harmonious proportions of the house or palace, as points of inferior importance; and the measurements were thirty cubits in height, twenty cubits in breadth, and forty cubits in length; so that ten as the number of perfectness was preserved as the standard even here. And in order to exhibit still further the perfectness and glory of the house of God, the walls were not constructed of ordinary quarry-stone, but of large square stones prepared at the quarry, and the walls were panelled within with costly wood after the manner of the palaces of Hither Asia, the panelling being filled with carved work and overlaid with gold plate. And whereas the overlaying of the whole of the interior with gold shadowed forth the glory of the house as the residence of the heavenly King, the idea of this house of God was still more distinctly expressed in the carved work of the walls. In the tabernacle the walls were decorated with tapestries in costly colours and interwoven figures of cherubim; but in the temple they were ornamented with carved work of figures of cherubim, palms, and opening flowers. To the figures of cherubim, as representations of the heavenly spirits which surround the Lord of glory and set forth the psychical life at its highest stage, there are thus added flowers, and still more particularly palms, those "princes of the vegetable kingdom," which, with their fine majestic growth, and their large, fresh, evergreen leaves, unite within themselves the whole of the fulness and glory of the vegetable life; to set forth the sanctuary (probably with special reference to Canaan as the land of palms, and with an allusion to the glory of the King of peace, inasmuch as the palm is not only the sign of Palestine, but also the symbol of peace) "as a place that was ever verdant, abiding in all the freshness of strength, and enfolding within itself the fulness of life," and thereby to make it a scene of health and life, of peace and joy, a "paradise of God," where the righteous who are planted there flourish, and blossom, and bear fruit to old age (Ps. xcii. 13). And this idea of the house, as an immoveable dwelling-place of God, is in perfect harmony with the setting up of two colossal cherubim in the Most Holy Place, which filled the whole space with their outspread wings, and overshadowed the ark of the covenant, to show that the ark of the covenant with its small golden cherubim upon the Capporeth, which had journeyed with the people through the desert to Canaan, was henceforth to have there a permanent and unchangeable abode.

CHAP. VII. SOLOMON'S PALACE AND THE FURNITURE OF THE TEMPLE.

Vers. 1–12. *Erection of the royal palace.*—Ver. 1 is closely connected in form with ch. vi. 38, and contains a summary account of the building, which is more minutely described in vers. 2-12. "And Solomon built his house (his palace) in thirteen years, and finished (in that time) all his house." The thirteen years are to be reckoned after the completion of the temple in seven years, so that the two buildings were executed in twenty years (ch. ix. 10). The expression כָּל־בֵּיתוֹ is used, because the palace consisted of several buildings connected together; namely, (1) the house of the forest of Lebanon (vers. 2–5); (2) the pillar-hall with the porch (ver. 6); (3) the throne-room and judgment-hall (ver. 7); (4) the king's dwelling-house and the house of Pharaoh's daughter (ver. 8). That all these buildings were only different portions of the one royal palace, and the house of the forest of Lebanon was not a summer residence of Solomon erected on Lebanon itself, as many of the earlier commentators supposed, is indisputably evident, not only from the first verse when correctly interpreted, but also and still more clearly from the fact that when the buildings of Solomon are spoken of afterwards (see ch. ix. 1, 10, 15, and x. 12), we only read of the house of Jehovah and the house of the king, that is to say, of the temple and *one* palace. The description of the several portions of this palace is so very brief, that it is impossible to form a distinct idea of its character. The different divisions are given in vers. 1–8 in their natural order, commencing at the back and terminating with the front (ver. 8), and there then follows in vers. 9–12 the description of the stones that were used.—Vers. 2-5. *The house of the forest of Lebanon.*—This building—so named because it was built, so to speak, of a forest of cedar pillars—is called in the Arabic the "house of his arms," because, according to ch. x. 17, it also served as a keeping-place for arms:" it is hardly to be regarded, however, as simply an arsenal, but was probably intended for other purposes also. He built it "a hundred cubits its length, fifty cubits its breadth, and thirty cubits its height, on four rows of cedar pillars, and hewn cedar beams (were) over the pillars." As the building was not merely a hall of pillars, but, according to ver. 3, had side-rooms (צְלָעוֹת, cf. ch. vi. 5) above the pillars, the construction of it can hardly be represented in any other way than this, that the rooms were built upon four rows of pillars, which ran round all four sides of the building, which was 100 cubits long and fifty cubits broad in the inside, and thus surrounded the inner court-yard on all sides. Of course the building could not rest merely upon pillars, but was surrounded on the outside with a strong wall of hewn square stones (ver. 9), so that the hewn beams which were laid upon the pillars had their outer ends built into the wall, and were supported by it, so as to give to the whole building the requisite strength.[1]—Ver. 3. "And roofing in (of) cedar was above over the side-rooms upon the pillars, five and forty; fifteen the row." סָפֻן is to be understood of the roofing, as in ch. vi 15. (compare סָפֻן, ch. vi. 15). The numbers "forty-five and fifteen the row" cannot refer to הָעַמּוּדִים, but must refer, as Thenius assumes, to הַצְּלָעֹת as the main idea, which is more precisely defined by עַל הָעַמּוּדִים. If we took it as referring to the pillars, as I myself have formerly done, we should have to assume that there were only galleries or pillar-halls above the lower rows of pillars, which is at variance with הַצְּלָעֹת. There were forty-five side-rooms, therefore, built upon the lower rows of pillars, in ranges of fifteen each. This could only be done by the ranges of rooms being built, not side by side, but one over the other, in other words, by the forty-five side-rooms forming three stories, as in the side buildings of the temple, so that each story had a "row" of fifteen side-rooms round it. This view receives support from ver. 4: "and beam-layers (שְׁקֻפִים, beams, as in ch. vi. 4) were three rows, and outlook against outlook three times;" *i.e.* the rows of side-rooms were built one over the other by means of layers of beams, so that the rooms had windows opposite to one another three times; that is to say, the windows looking out upon the court were so arranged in the three stories that those on the one side were *vis à vis* to those on the opposite side of the building. The expression in ver. 5, מֻל מֶחֱזָה אֶל־מֶחֱזָה, "window over against window," compels us to take אֶל־מֶחֱזָה in the sense of "opposite to the window" (אֶל, *versus*), and not, as Thenius proposes, "outlook against outlook," according to which אֶל is supposed to indicate that the windows were only separated from one another by slender piers. מֶחֱזָה, which only occurs here, is different from חַלּוֹן, the ordinary window, and probably denotes a large opening affording a wide outlook.—Ver. 5. "And all the doorways and mouldings were square of beams" (שֶׁקֶף is an accusative of free subordination, denoting the material or the mode of execution; cf. Ewald, § 284, *a*, *β*). "Square with a

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[1] Thenius therefore supposes that "the lower part of the armoury formed a peristyle, a *fourfold* row of pillars running round inside its walls and enclosing a courtyard, so that the Vulgate alone gives the true sense, *quatuor deambulacra inter columnas cedrinas;*" and he points to the court of the palace of *Luxor*, which has a double row of pillars round it. The number of pillars is not given in the text, but Thenius in his drawing of this building sets it down at 400, which would certainly present a forest-like aspect to any one entering the building. Nevertheless we cannot regard this assumption as correct, because the pillars, which we cannot suppose to have been less than a cubit in thickness, would have been so close to one another that the four rows of pillars could not have formed four *deambulacra.* As the whole building was only fifty cubits broad, and this breadth included the inner courtyard, we cannot suppose that the sides of the building were more than ten cubits deep, which would leave a breadth of thirty cubits for the court. If then four pillars, each of a cubit in thickness, stood side by side or one behind the other in a space of ten cubits in depth, the distance between the pillars would be only a cubit and a half, that is to say, would be only just enough for *one* man and no more to walk conveniently through. And what could have been the object of crowding pillars together in this way, so as to render the entire space almost useless? It is on this ground, probably, that Hermann Weiss assumes that each side of the oblong building, which was half as broad as it was long, was supported by one row, and therefore all the sides together by four rows of cedar pillars, and the beams of the same material which rested upon them. But this view is hardly a correct one; for it not only does not do justice to the words of the text, "four rows of pillars," but it is insufficient in itself, for the simple reason that one row of pillars on each side would not have afforded the requisite strength and stability to the three stories built upon them, even

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if we should not suppose the rooms in these stories to be very broad, since the further three rows of pillars, which Weiss assumes in addition, according to ver. 3, as the actual supporters of the upper building, have no foundation in the text. The words "four rows of cedar pillars" do not absolutely require the assumption that there were four rows side by side or one behind the other on every side of the building; for the assertion that טוּר does not denote a row in the sense of a straight line, but generally signifies a row surrounding and enclosing a space, is refuted by Ex. xxviii. 17, where we read of the four טוּרִים of precious stones upon the breastplate of the high priest.—Is it not likely that the truth lies midway between these two views, and that the following is the view most in accordance with the actual fact, namely, that there were four rows of pillars running along the full length of the building, but that they were distributed on the two sides, so that there were only two rows on each side? In this case a person entering from the front would see four rows of pillars running the whole length of the building. In any case the rows of pillars would of necessity be broken in front by the entrance itself.

The utter uncertainty as to the number and position of the four rows of pillars is sufficient in itself to render it quite impossible to draw any plan of the building that could in the slightest degree answer to the reality. Moreover, there is no allusion at all in the description given in the text to either entrance or exit, or to staircases and other things, and the other buildings are still more scantily described, so that nothing certain can be determined with regard to their relative position or their probable connection with one another. For this reason, after studying the matter again and again, I have been obliged to relinquish the intention to illustrate the description in the text by drawings.

straight upper beam" (Thenius) cannot be the correct rendering of רְבָעִים שָׁקֶף. Thenius proposes to read וְהַמֶּחֱזוֹת for וְהַמְּזוּזוֹת, after the reading αἱ χῶραι of the Seventy, who have also rendered מֶחֱזָה in ver. 4 by χῶρα, a broad space. It may be pleaded in support of this, that רְבָעִים is less applicable to the doorposts or mouldings than to the doorways and outlooks (windows), inasmuch as, if the doorways were square, the square form of the moulding or framework would follow as a matter of course. הַפְּתָחִים are both the doors, through which the different rooms were connected with one another, and also those through which the building and its stories were reached, of course by stairs, probably winding staircases, as in the side stories of the temple. The stairs were placed, no doubt, at the front of the building. The height given is thirty cubits, corresponding to that of the whole building (ver. 2). If we reckon the height of the lower pillars at eight cubits, there were twenty-two cubits left for the stories; and assuming that the roofing of each was one cubit in thickness, there remained eighteen cubits in all for the rooms of the three stories; and this, if equally distributed, would give an internal height of six cubits for each story, or if arranged on a graduated scale, which would probably be more appropriate, a height of seven, six, and five cubits respectively.

Vers. 6–8. *The other buildings.*—Ver. 6. "And he made the *pillar-hall*, fifty cubits its length, and thirty cubits its breadth, and a hall in front of them, and pillars and a threshold in front of them." With regard to the situation of this hall in relation to the other parts of the building, which is not precisely defined, we may infer, from the fact that it is mentioned between the house of the forest of Lebanon and the throne and judgment halls, that it stood between these two. The length of this building (fifty cubits) corresponds to the breadth of the house of the forest of Lebanon; so that, according to the analogy of the temple-hall (ch. vi. 3), we might picture to ourselves the length given here as running parallel to the breadth of the house of the forest of Lebanon, and might therefore assume that the pillar-hall was fifty cubits broad and thirty cubits deep. But the statement that there was a hall *in front of* the pillar-hall is irreconcilable with this assumption. We must therefore understand the length in the natural way, as signifying the measurement from back to front, and regard the pillar-hall as a portico fifty cubits long and thirty cubits broad, in front of which there was also a porch as an entrance. עַל־פְּנֵיהֶם, in front of them, *i.e.* in front of the pillars which formed this portico. The last words, "and pillars and threshold in front of them," refer to the porch. This had also pillars, probably on both sides of the doorway, which carried the roof; and in front of them was עָב, *i.e.*, according to the Chaldee סַקְפְּתָא, the moulding or framework of the threshold, a threshold-like entrance, with steps.—Ver. 7. "And the *throne-hall*, where he judged, the judgment-hall, he made and (indeed) covered with cedar, from floor to floor." The throne-hall and the judgment-hall are therefore one and the same hall, which was both a court of judgment and an audience-chamber, and in which, no doubt, there stood the splendid throne described in ch. x. 18–20. But it is distinguished from the pillar-hall by the repetition of עָשָׂה. It probably followed immediately upon this, but was clearly distinguished from it by the fact that it was covered with cedar מֵהַקַּרְקַע עַד הַקַּרְקַע. These words are very obscure. The rendering given by Thenius, "panelled from the floor to the beams of the roof," is open to these objections: (1) that סָפַן generally does not mean to *panel*, but simply to *cover*, and that סָפַן בָּאֶרֶז in particular cannot possibly be taken in a different sense here from that which it bears in ver. 3, where it denotes the roofing of the rooms built above the portico of pillars; and (2) that the alteration of the second הקרקע into הַקּוֹרוֹת has no critical warrant in the rendering of the Syriac, *a fundamento ad cœlum ejus usque*, or in that of the Vulgate, *a pavimento usque ad summitatem*, whereas the LXX. and Chald. both read עַד הַקַּרְקַע. But even if we were to read הַקּוֹרוֹת, this would not of itself signify the roof beams, inasmuch as in ch. vi. 16 הַקִּירוֹת or הַקּוֹרוֹת receives its more precise definition from the expression קִירוֹת הַסִּפֻּן (קוֹרוֹת) in ver. 15. The words in question cannot have any other meaning than this: "from the one floor to the other," *i.e.* either from the floor of the throne-hall to the floor of the pillar-hall (described in ver. 6), or more probably from the lower floor to the upper, inasmuch as there were rooms built over the throne-room, just as in the case of the house of the forest of Lebanon; for קַרְקַע may denote not only the lower floor, but also the floor of upper rooms, which served at the same time as the ceiling of the lower rooms. So much, at any rate, may be gathered from these words, with all their obscurity, that the throne-hall was not an open pillar-hall, but was only open in front, and was shut in by solid walls on the other three sides.—

Ver. 8. After (behind) the throne and judgment hall then followed the king's own palace, the principal entrance to which was probably through the throne-hall, so that the king really delivered judgment and granted audiences in the gate of his palace. "His house, where he dwelt, in the other court inwards from the (throne) hall was like this work," *i.e.* was built like the throne-hall; "and a (dwelling) house he made for the daughter of Pharaoh, whom Solomon had taken, like this hall." The construction of the dwelling-places of the king and queen cannot be ascertained from these words, because the hall with which its style is compared is not more minutely described. All that can be clearly inferred from the words, "in the other court inside the hall," is, that the abode of the king and his Egyptian wife had a court of its own, and when looked at from the entrance, formed the hinder court of the whole palace. The house of Pharaoh's daughter was probably distinct from the dwelling-place of the king, so that the palace of the women formed a building by itself, most likely behind the dwelling-house of the king, since the women in the East generally occupy the inner portion of the house. The statement that the dwelling-place of the king and queen formed a court by itself within the complex of the palace, warrants the further inference, that the rest of the buildings (the house of the forest of Lebanon, the pillar-hall, and the throne-hall) were united together in one first or front court.

Vers. 9–12. "All these (viz. the whole of the buildings described in vers. 2–8) were costly stones, after the measure of that which is hewn, sawn with the saw within and without (*i.e.* on the inner and outer side of the halls and buildings), and from the foundation to the corbels, and from without to the great court." הַטְּפָחוֹת, the corbels, upon which the beams of the roof rest. The Sept. renders it *ἕως τῶν γεισῶν.* Thenius understands by this the battlements which protected the flat roofs, and therefore interprets טְפָחוֹת as signifying the stone border of the roof of the palace. But *γεῖσος*, or *γεῖσσος*, *γεῖσσον*, merely signifies the projection of the roof, and, generally speaking, every projection in a building resembling a roof, but not the battlement-like protection or border of the flat roof, which is called מַעֲקֶה in Deut. xxii. 8. חוּץ, the outside in distinction from the great court, can only be the outer court; and as הֶחָצֵר הַגְּדוֹלָה is no doubt identical with חָצֵר הָאַחֶרֶת (ver. 8), and therefore refers to the court surrounding the king's dwelling-house, חִיצֹן is to be understood as relating to the courtyard or fore-court surrounding the front halls.—Vers. 10, 11. "And the foundation was laid with costly, large stones of ten and eight cubits (*sc.* in length, and of corresponding breadth and thickness). And above (the foundation, and therefore the visible walls, were) costly stones, after the measure of that which is hewn, and cedars."—Ver. 12. And (as for) the great court, there were round it three rows (*i.e.* it was formed of three rows) of hewn stones and a row of hewn cedar beams, as in the inner court of the house of Jehovah (see at ch. vi. 36) and the hall of the house. וְלַחֲצַר signifies "and so with the court," *Vav* serving as a comparison, as in Prov. xxv. 3, 20, and frequently in Proverbs (see Dietrich in Ges. *Lex. s.v.* ו, and Ewald, § 340, *b*), so that there is no necessity for the un-Hebraic conjecture of Thenius, כַּלַּחֲצַר. לְאוּלָם הַבָּיִת in all probability refers not to the temple-hall, but to the pillar-hall of the palace, the surrounding wall of which was of the same nature as the wall of the great, *i.e.* the other or hinder, court.[1]

Vers. 13–51. THE METALLIC VESSELS OF THE TEMPLE (compare 2 Chron. ii. 13, 14, and iii. 15–v. 1).—Vers. 13, 14. To make these vessels king Hiram had sent to Solomon, at his request (2 Chron. ii. 6), a workman named *Hiram* of Tyre. Ver. 13 contains a supplementary remark, in which וַיִּשְׁלַח must be rendered in the pluperfect (compare the remarks on Gen. ii. 19). King Solomon had sent and fetched *Hiram* from Tyre. This artisan bore the same name as the king, חִירָם or חִירוֹם (ver. 40), in 2 Chron. ii. 13 חוּרָם (Huram), with the epithet אָבִי, *i.e.* my father, אָב being a title of honour equivalent to master or counsellor, as in Gen. xlv. 8. He was the son of a widow of the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was אִישׁ צֹרִי, *i.e.* a Tyrian by birth. According to 2 Chron. ii. 13, his mother was "of the daughters of Dan," *i.e.* of the tribe of Dan. Both statements may easily be united thus: she was a Danite by birth, and married into the tribe of Naphtali. When her husband died, she was married again as the widow of a Naphtalite, and became the wife of a Tyrian, to whom she bore a son, *Hiram.* This explanation is also adopted by Bertheau (on the Chronicles); and the conjecture of Lundius, Thenius, and others, that the mother was an Israelitish widow of the city of Dan in the tribe of Naphtali, which was quite close to Tyre, is less in harmony with the expression "of the daughters of Dan." חֹרֵשׁ נְחֹשֶׁת, "a brass-worker," refers to הוּא (he), *i.e. Hiram,* and not to his father (Thenius). The skill of Hiram is described in almost the same terms as that of Bezaleel in Ex. xxxi. 3 sqq., with this exception, that Bezaleel's skill is attributed to his being filled with the Spirit of God, *i.e.* is described rather as a supernatural gift, whereas in the case of Hiram the more indefinite expression, "he was filled with wisdom, etc.," is used, representing it rather as a natural endowment. In the account given here, Hiram is merely described as a worker in brass, because he is only mentioned at the commencement of the section which treats of the preparation of the brazen vessels of the temple. According to 2 Chron. ii. 14, he was able to work in gold, silver, brass, iron, stone, wood, purple, etc. There is nothing improbable in this extension of his skill to wood and to

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[1] The situation of this palace in Jerusalem is not defined. Ewald supposes (*Gesch.* iii. p. 317) that it was probably built on the southern continuation of the temple-mountain, commonly called *Ophel*, *i.e.* Hill. But "nothing more is needed to convince us that it cannot have stood upon Ophel, than a single glance at any geographical outline of Ophel on one of the best of the modern maps, and a recollection of the fact that, according to Neh. iii. 26, 31, it was upon Ophel, where the king's palace is said to have stood, that the temple-socagers and shopkeepers had their places of abode after the captivity" (Thenius). The view held by earlier travellers and pilgrims to Zion, and defended by Berggren (p. 109 sqq.), namely, that the ancient Solomonian and Asmonæan palaces stood upon Moriah on the western side of the temple, is equally untenable. For the xystus, above which, according to Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* ii. 16, 3, the Asmonæan palace stood, was connected with the temple by a bridge, and therefore did not stand upon Moriah, but upon Zion or the ἄνω πόλις, since this bridge, according to Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* vi. 6, 2, connected the temple with the upper city. Moreover, it clearly follows from the passages of Josephus already noticed (p. 84 sq.), in which he refers to the substructures of the temple area, that the temple occupied the whole of Moriah towards the west, and extended as far as the valley of the Tyropœon, and consquently there was no room for a palace on that side. When Josephus affirms, therefore (*Ant.* viii. 5, 2), that Solomon's palace stood opposite to the temple (ἀντικρὺς ἔχων ναόν), it can only have been built on the north-east side of Zion, as most of the modern writers assume (see W. Krafft,

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Topographie Jerus. p. 114 sqq., and Berggr. p. 110). This is sustained not only by the probability that the Asmonæans would hardly build their palace anywhere else than on the spot where the palace of the kings of Judah built by Solomon stood, but also by the account of the elevation of Joash to the throne in 2 Kings xi. and 2 Chron. xxiii., from which it is perfectly obvious that the royal palace stood upon Zion opposite to the temple.

the art of weaving. Bezaleel also combined in himself all these talents. Of course Hiram was merely a foreman or leader of these different branches of art; and he certainly did not come alone, but brought several assistants with him, who carried out the different works under his superintendence.—The enumeration of them commences with the pillars of the temple-hall.

Vers. 15–22. *The brazen pillars of the porch* (compare 2 Chron. iii. 15–17).—He formed the two brazen pillars, which were erected, according to 2 Chron. iii. 15, "before the (temple) house, *i.e.* in front of the hall of the temple. One was eighteen cubits high, and a thread of twelve cubits surrounded (spanned) the other pillar." The statement of the height of the one pillar and that of the circumference of the other is to be understood as an abbreviated expression, signifying that the height and thickness mentioned applied to the one as well as to the other, or that they were alike in height and circumference. According to the Chronicles, they were thirty-five cubits long; which many expositors understand as signifying that the length of the two together was thirty-five cubits, so that each one was only 17½ cubits long, for which the full number 18 is substituted in our text. But this mode of reconciling the discrepancy is very improbable, and is hardly in harmony with the words of the Chronicles. The number 35 evidently arose from confounding the numeral letters יח = 18 with לה = 35. The correctness of the number 18 is confirmed by 2 Kings xxv. 17 and Jer. lii. 21. The pillars were hollow, the brass being four finger-breadths in thickness (Jer. lii. 21); and they were cast in the Jordan valley (ver. 46).—Ver. 16. "And he made two capitals (כֹּתָרוֹת), to set them on the heads of the pillars, cast in brass, five cubits the height of the one and of the other capital." If, on the other hand, in 2 Kings xxv. 17 the height of the capital is said to have been three cubits, this discrepancy cannot be explained on the supposition that the capitals had been reduced two cubits in the course of time; but the statement rests, like the parallel passage in Jer. lii. 22, upon an error of the text, *i.e.* upon the substitution of ג (3) for ה (5).—Ver. 17. "Plait (*i.e.* ornaments of plait), plait-work and cords (twist, resembling) chain-work, were on the capitals, which were upon the heads of the pillars, seven on the one capital and seven on the other capital." Consequently this decoration consisted of seven twists arranged as festoons, which were hung round the capitals of the pillars.—Ver. 18. "And he made pomegranates, and indeed two rows round about the one twist, to cover the capitals which were upon the head of the pillars; and so he did with the other capital." In the Masoretic text the words הָעַמּוּדִים and הָרִמֹּנִים are confused together, and we must read, as some of the Codd. do, in the first clause אֶת־הָרִמֹּנִים for אֶת־הָעַמּוּדִים, and in the middle clause עַל־רֹאשׁ הָעַמּוּדִים for עַל־רֹאשׁ הָרִמֹּנִים. This is not only required by the sense, but sustained by a comparison with ver. 19. The relation between the two rows of pomegranates and the plaited work is indeed not precisely defined; but it is generally and correctly assumed, that one row ran round the pillars below the plaited work and the other above, so that the plaited work, which was formed of seven cords plaited together in the form of festoons, was enclosed above and below by the rows of pomegranates. If we compare with this the further statements in vers. 41 and 42, 2 Chron. iii. 16 and iv. 12, 13, and Jer. lii. 23, הַכֹּתָרֹת is there more precisely designated גֻּלּוֹת הַכֹּתָרֹת, "bowls of the capitals," from which it is evident that the lower portion of the capitals, to which the braided work was fastened, was rounded in the form of a pitcher or caldron. The number of the pomegranates on the two festoons is given at 400, so that there were 200 on each capital, and consequently each row contained 100 (2 Chron. iii. 16); and according to Jer. (*l.c.*) there were 96 רוּחָה, "windwards," and in all 100 on the braided work round about. רוּחָה, "windwards," can hardly be taken in any other sense than this: in the direction of the wind, *i.e.* facing the four quarters of the heavens. This meaning is indisputably sustained by the use of the word רוּחַ, to denote the quarters of the heavens, in statements of the aspect of buildings (Ezek. xlii. 16–18), whereas there is no foundation whatever for such meanings as "airwards = uncovered" (Böttcher, Thenius), or hanging freely (Ewald).[1]—In vers. 19 and 20 a second decoration of the capitals of the pillars is mentioned, from which we may see that the rounding with the chain-like plaited work and the pomegranates enclosing it did not cover the capital to the very top, but only the lower portion of it. The decoration of the upper part is described in ver. 19: "And capitals, which were upon the top of the pillars, were (or, Hiram made) lily-work after the manner of the hall, four cubits." The lily-work occupied, according to ver. 20, the upper portion of the capitals, which is here called כֹּתָרֹת, as a crown set upon the lower portion. It was lily-work, *i.e.* sculpture in the form of flowering lilies. The words בָּאוּלָם אַרְבַּע אַמּוֹת are obscure. According to Böttcher and Thenius, בָּאוּלָם is intended to indicate the position of the pillars within the hall, so that their capitals sustained the lintel of the doorway. But even if בָּאוּלָם were rendered, within the hall, as it is by Böttcher, it is impossible to see how this meaning could be obtained from the words "capitals upon the head of the pillars lily-work within the hall." In that case we must at least have "the pillars within the hall;" and בָּאוּלָם would be connected with הָעַמּוּדִים, instead of being separated from it by מַעֲשֵׂה שׁוּשַׁן. Even if we were to introduce a stop after שׁוּשַׁן and take בָּאוּלָם by itself, the expression "in (or at) the hall" would not in itself indicate the position of the pillars in the doorway, to say nothing of the fact that it is only in ver. 21 that anything is said concerning the position of the pillars. Again, the measurement "four cubits" cannot be understood, as it is by Thenius, as denoting the diameter of the capitals of the pillars; it must rather indicate the measure of the lily-work, that is to say, it affirms that there were four cubits of lily-work on the capitals, which were five cubits high, —in other words, the lily-work covered the four upper cubits of the capitals; from which it still further follows, that the plaited work which formed the decoration of the lower portion of the capitals was only one cubit broad or high. Consequently בָּאוּלָם cannot be understood in any other sense than "in the manner of or according to the hall," and can only express the thought, that there was lily-work on the capitals of the pillars as there was on the hall. For the vindication of this use of בְּ

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[1] It is hardly necessary to observe, that the expression שָׁאַף רוּחַ, to gasp for air, in Jer. ii. 24, xiv. 6, does not warrant our giving to רוּחָה the meaning open or uncovered, as Böttcher supposes. But when Thenius follows Böttcher (*Proben*, p. 335) in adducing in support of this the *fact* "that the tangent, which is drawn to any circle divided into a hundred parts, covers exactly four of these parts," the fact rests upon a simple error, inasmuch as any drawing will show that a tangent only touches *one* point of a circle divided into a hundred parts. And the remark of Böttcher, "If you describe on the outside of a circle of twelve cubits in circumference a hundred small circles of twelve-hundredths of a cubit in diameter, a tangent drawn thereupon will

cover to the eye exactly four small circles, although mathematically it touches only one of them in one point," is not correct according to any measurement. For if the tangent touches one of these smaller circles with mathematical exactness, to the eye there will be covered either three or five half circles, or even seven, but never four.

see Ges. *Lex.* by Dietrich, *s.v.* ב.[1] There is no valid objection to the inference to which this leads, namely, that on the frontispiece of the temple-hall there was a decoration of lily-work. For since the construction of the hall is not more minutely described, we cannot expect a description of its decorations.—In ver. 20 a more precise account is given of the position in which the crowns consisting of lily-work were placed on the capitals of the columns, so that this verse is to be regarded as an explanation of ver. 19: namely, capitals upon the pillars (did he make) also above near the belly, which was on the other side of the plait-work." הַבֶּטֶן, *the* belly, *i.e.* the belly-shaped rounding, can only be the rounding of the lower portion of the capitals, which is *called* גֻּלָּה in vers. 41, 42. Hence לְעֵבֶר הַשְּׂבָכָה (*Keri*), "on the other side of the plaited work," can only mean behind or under the plait, since we cannot suppose that there was a belly-shaped rounding above the caldron-shaped rounding which was covered with plaited work, and between this and the lily-work. The belly-shaped rounding, above or upon which the plaited work lay round about, might, when looked at from without, be described as being on the other side of it, *i.e.* behind it. In the second half of the verse: "and the pomegranates two hundred in rows round about on the second capital," the number of the pomegranates placed upon the capitals, which was omitted in ver. 18, is introduced in a supplementary form.[2]—Ver. 21. "And he set up the pillars at the hall of the Holy Place, and set up the right pillar, and called its name *Jachin*, and . . . the left . . . *Boaz*." Instead of לְאוּלָם הַהֵיכָל we have in 2 Chron. iii. 15 לִפְנֵי הַבַּיִת, and in ver. 17 עַל־פְּנֵי הַהֵיכָל, "before the house," "before the Holy Place." This unquestionably implies that the two brazen pillars stood unconnected in front of the hall, on the right and left sides of it, and not within the hall as supporters of the roof. Nevertheless many have decided in favour of the latter view. But of the four arguments used by Thenius in proof that this was the position of the pillars, there is no force whatever in the first, which is founded upon Amos ix. 1, unless we assume, as Merz and others do, that the words of the prophet, "Smite the capital, that the thresholds may shake, and break them (the capitals of the pillars), that they may fall upon the head of all," refer to the temple at Jerusalem, and not, as Thenius and others suppose, to the temple erected at Bethel for the calf-worship. For even if the temple at Bethel had really had a portal supported by pillars, it would by no means follow that the pillars Jachin and Boaz in Solomon's temple supported the roof of the hall, as it is nowhere stated that the temple of Jeroboam at Bethel was an exact copy of that of Solomon. And even with the only correct interpretation, in which the words of Amos are made to refer to the temple at Jerusalem, the argument founded upon them in support of the position of the pillars as bearers of the hall rests upon the false idea, that the סִפִּים, which are shaken by the smiting of the capital, are the beams lying upon the top of the pillars, or the *superliminaria* of the hall. It is impossible to prove that סַף has any such meaning. The beam over the entrance, or upon the doorposts, is called מַשְׁקוֹף in Ex. xii. 7, 22, 23, whereas סַף denotes the threshold, *i.e.* the lower part of the framework of the door, as is evident from Judg. xix. 27. The words of the prophet are not to be interpreted architecturally, but to be taken in a rhetorical sense; "so that by the blow, which strikes the capital, and causes the thresholds to tremble, such a blow is intended as shakes the temple in all its joints" (Baur on Amos ix. 1). "הַכַּפְתּוֹר, a kind of ornament at the top of the pillars, and הַסִּפִּים, the thresholds, are opposed to one another, to express the thought that the building is to be shaken and destroyed *a summo usque ad imum, a capite ad calcem*" (Hengstenberg, *Christol.* i. p. 366 transl.). The other arguments derived from

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[1] This is the way in which the earlier translators appear to have understood it: *e.g.*, LXX. *ἔργον κρίνου κατὰ τὸ αὐλὰμ τεσσάρων πηχῶν* ("lily-work according to the hall four cubits"); Vulg. *Capitella . . . quasi opere lilii fabricata erant in porticu quatuor cubitorum;* Chald. עוֹבַד שׁוֹשַׁנְתָּא לְקִיט בְּאוּלַמָּא אַרְבַּע אַמִּין (*opus liliaceum collectum in porticu quatuor cubitorum*); Syr. *opus liliaceum idem fecit* (ܥܒܕ ܒܐܣܛܘܐ) *in porticu quatuor cubitis.* These readings appear to be based upon the view supported by Rashi (בְּאוּלָם for כְּאוּלָם): lily-work as it was in the hall.

[2] Hermann Weiss (*Kostümkunde*, i. p. 367) agrees in the main with the idea worked out in the text; but he assumes, on the ground of monumental views, that the decoration was of a much simpler kind, and one by no means out of harmony with the well-known monumental remains of the East. In his opinion, the pillars consisted of "a shaft nineteen cubits in height, surrounded at the top, exactly after the fashion of the ornamentation of the Egyptian pillars, with seven bands decorated like plaited work, which unitedly covered a cubit, in addition to which there was the lily-work of five cubits in height, *i.e.* a slender capital rising up in the form of the calyx of a lily, ornamented with pomegranates." Our reasons for dissenting from this opinion are given in the exposition of the different verses.

Ezek. xl. 48 and 49, and from Josephus, *Ant.* viii. 3, 4, prove nothing at all. From the words of Josephus, *τούτων τῶν κιονῶν τὸν μὲν ἕτερον κατὰ τὴν δεξιὰν ἔστησε τοῦ προπυλαίου παραστάδα . . . τὸν δὲ ἕτερον, κ.τ.λ.*, it would only follow "that the pillars (according to the view of Josephus) must have stood in the doorway," if it were the case that *παραστάς* had no other meaning than *doorpost*, and *προπύλαιον* could be understood as referring to the temple-hall generally. But this is conclusively disproved by the fact that Josephus always calls the temple-hall *πρόναον* (*l.c.*, and viii. 3, 2 and 3), so that *προπύλαιον* can only denote the fore-court, and *παραστάς* a pillar standing by itself. Consequently Josephus regarded the pillars Jachin and Boaz as *propylæa* erected in front of the hall. We must therefore adhere to the view expressed by Bähr (*d. Tempel*, p. 35 sqq.), that these pillars did not support the roof of the temple-hall, but were set up in front of the hall on either side of the entrance. In addition to the words of the text, this conclusion is sustained (1) by the circumstance that the two pillars are not mentioned in connection with the building of the temple and the hall, but are referred to for the first time here in the enumeration of the sacred vessels of the court that were made of brass. "If the pillars had formed an essential part of the construction and had been supporters of the hall, they would certainly have been mentioned in the description of the building, and not have been placed among the articles of furniture" (Schnaase); and moreover they would not have been made of metal like the rest of the vessels, but would have been constructed of the same building materials as the hall and the house, namely, of stone or wood (Bähr). And to this we may add (2) the monumental character of the pillars, which is evident from the names given to them. No architectural portion of the building received a special name.[1] *Jachin* (יָכִין): "he establishes," *stabiliet templum* (Simonis *Onom.* p. 430); and *Boaz* (בֹּעַז), *ex* בּוֹ עָז *in illo, sc. Domino, robur* (Sim. p. 460). Kimchi has correctly interpreted the first name thus: "Let this temple stand for ever;" and the second, "Solomon desired that God would give it strength and endurance." The pillars were symbols of the stability and strength, which not only the temple as an outward building, but the kingdom of God in Israel as embodied in the temple, received from the Lord, who had chosen the temple to be His dwelling-place in the midst of His people.[1] —In ver. 22 it is stated again that there was lily-work upon the head of the pillars,—a repetition which may be explained from the significance of this emblem of the capitals of the pillars; and then the words, "So was the work of the capitals finished," bring the account of this ornament of the temple to a close.

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[1] Stieglitz (*Gesch. der Baukunst*, p. 127) aptly observes in relation to this: "The architect cannot subscribe to Meyer's view (*that the pillars were supporters of the hall*), since it was only through their *independent position that* the pillars received the solemn character intended to be given to them, and by their dignity subserved the *end designed*, of exalting the whole building and calling attention to the real purpose of the whole."

Vers. 23–26. *The brazen sea* (cf. 2 Chron. iv. 2–5).—"He made the molten sea—a water-basin called יָם (*mare*) on account of its size—ten cubits from one upper rim to the other," *i.e.* in diameter measured from the upper rim to the one opposite to it, "rounded all round, and five cubits its (external) height, and a line of thirty cubits encircled it round about," *i.e.* it was thirty cubits in circumference. The *Chethîb* קוה is to be read קָוֶה here and in Zech. i. 16 and Jer. xxxi. 39, for which the *Keri* has קַו in all these passages. קָוֶה or קַו means a line for measuring, which is expressed in ver. 15 by חוּט. The relation of the diameter to the circumference is expressed in whole numbers which come very near to the mathematical proportions. The more exact proportions would be as 7 to 22, or 113 to 355. —Ver. 24. And colocynths (gourds) ran round it under its brim, ten to the cubit, surrounding the sea in two rows; the colocynths "cast in its casting," *i.e.* cast at the same time as the vessel itself. Instead of פְּקָעִים, gourds (see at ch. vi. 18), we find דְּמוּת בְּקָרִים, figures of oxen, in the corresponding text of the Chronicles, and in the last clause merely הַבָּקָר, an evident error of the pen, בקרים being substituted by mistake for פקעים, and afterwards interpreted דמות בקרים. The assumption by which the early expositors removed the discrepancy, namely, that they were casts of bullocks' heads, is not to be thought of, for the simple reason that בקרים signifies oxen and not the *heads* of oxen. How far apart the two rows of gourd-like ornaments were, it is impossible to decide. Their size may be estimated, from the fact that there were ten within the space of a cubit, at a little over two inches in diameter.—Ver. 25. This vessel stood (rested) upon twelve brazen oxen, three turning to the north, three to the west, three to the south, and three to the east, "and the sea above upon them, and all their backs (turned) inwards;" *i.e.* they were so placed that three of their heads were directed towards each quarter of the heavens. The size of the oxen is not given; but we must assume that it was in proportion to the size and height of the sea, and therefore about five cubits in height up to the back. These figures stood, no doubt, upon a metal plate, which gave them a fixed and immoveable position (see the engraving in my *bibl. Archäol.* Taf. iii. fig. 1).—Ver. 26. "And its thickness (*i.e.* the thickness of the metal) was a handbreadth" = four finger-breadths, as in the case of the brazen pillars (see at ver. 15), "and its upper rim like work of a goblet (or of a goblet-rim, *i.e.* bent outwards), lily-blossom," *i.e.* ornamented with lily-flowers. It held 2000 baths; according to the Chronicles, 3000 baths. The latter statement has arisen from the confusion of ג (3) with ב (2); since, according to the calculation of Thenius, the capacity of the vessel, from the dimensions given, could not exceed 2000 baths. This vessel, which took the place of the laver in the tabernacle, was provided for the priests to wash themselves (2 Chron. iv. 6), that is to say, that a supply of water might be kept in readiness to enable the priests to wash their hands and feet when they approached the altar to officiate, or were about to enter the Holy Place (Ex. xxx. 18 sqq.). There were no doubt taps by which the water required for this purpose was drawn off from the sea.[1]—The artistic form of the vessel corresponded to its sacred purpose. The rim of the basin, which rose upwards in the form of a lily, was intended to point to the holiness and loveliness of that life which issued from the sanctuary. The twelve oxen, on which it rested, pointed to the twelve tribes of Israel as a priestly nation, which cleansed itself here in the persons of its priests, to appear clean and holy before the Lord. Just as the number twelve unquestionably suggests the allusion to the twelve tribes of the covenant nation, so, in the choice of oxen or bullocks as supporters of the basin, it is impossible to overlook the significance of this selection of the first and highest of the sacrificial animals to represent the priestly service, especially if we compare the position of the lions on Solomon's throne (ch. x. 20).

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[1] There is no necessity to refute the fanciful notion of Ewald, that these pillars, "when they were erected and consecrated, were certainly named after men who were held in estimation at that time, probably after the younger sons of Solomon," and that of Thenius, that יָכִין בְּעֹז, "He (the Lord) establishes with strength," was engraved upon them as an inscription.

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[1] For the different conjectures on this subject, see Lundius, *jud. Heiligthümer*, p. 356. Thenius supposes that there was also a provision for filling the vessel, since the height of it would have rendered it a work of great labour and time to fill it by hand, and that there was probably a pipe hidden behind the figures of the oxen, since, according to Aristeas, *histor. LXX. Interp.*, Oxon. 1692, p. 32 (also Eusebii *præp. evang.* ix. 38), there were openings concealed at the foot of the altar, out of which water was allowed to run at certain seasons for the requisite cleansing of the pavement of the court from

Vers. 27–39. THE BRAZEN STANDS AND THEIR BASINS.[1]—He made ten stands of brass, each four cubits long, four cubits broad, and three cubits high. מְכֹנוֹת, stands or stools (Luther), is the name given to these vessels from their purpose, viz. to serve as supports to the basins which were used for washing the flesh of the sacrifices. They were square chests cast in brass, of the dimensions given.—Vers. 28, 29. Their work (their construction) was the following: they had מִסְגְּרוֹת, lit. surroundings, *i.e.* panels or flat sides, and that between שְׁלַבִּים, *commissuræ*, *i.e.* frames or borders, which enclosed the sides, and were connected together at the angles; and upon the panels within the borders (there were figures of) lions, oxen, and cherubim. The statement in Josephus, that each centre was divided into three compartments, has nothing to support it in the biblical text, nor is it at all probable in itself, inasmuch as a division of this kind would have rendered the figures placed upon them insignificantly small. "And upon the borders was a base above." כֵּן is a noun, and has been rendered correctly by the Chaldee כַּנְּתָא, *basis*. The meaning is, above, over the borders, there was a pedestal for the basin upon the chest, which is more fully described in ver. 31. To take כֵּן as an adverb does not give a suitable sense. For if we adopt the rendering, and upon the corner borders (or ledges) likewise above (De Wette and Ewald),—*i.e.* there were also figures of lions, oxen, and cherubim upon the corner borders,

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the blood of the sacrifices; and there is still a fountain just in the neighbourhood of the spot on which, according to ver. 39, the brazen sea must have stood (see Schultz's plan); and in the time of the Crusaders there was a large basin, covered by a dome supported by columns (see Robinson, *Pal.* i. 446). But even if the later temple was supplied with the water required by means of artificial water-pipes, the Solomonian origin of these arrangements or designs is by no means raised even to the rank of probability.

[1] The description which follows will be more easily understood by comparing with it the sketch given in my *biblische Archäologie*, Taf. iii. fig. 4.

—it is impossible to tell what the meaning of מִמַּעַל can be, to say nothing of the fact that on the corner borders there could hardly be room for such figures as these. This last argument also tells against the rendering adopted by Thenius: "and upon the corner borders, above as well as below the lions and oxen, (there were) wreaths;" in which, moreover, it is impossible to attach any supportable meaning to the כֵּן. When, on the other hand, Thenius objects to our view that the pedestal in question is spoken of for the first time in ver. 31, and that the expression "above the corner borders (ledges)" would be extremely unsuitable, since the pedestal in question was above the whole stand; the former remark is not quite correct, for ver. 31 merely contains a more minute description of the character of the pedestal, and the latter is answered by the fact that the pedestal derived its strength from the corner borders or ledges. "And below the lions and oxen were wreaths, pendant work." לֹיוֹת, here and at ver. 36, is to be explained from לִוְיָה in Prov. i. 9 and iv. 9, and signifies twists or wreaths. מַעֲשֵׂה מוֹרָד is not "work of sinking," *i.e.* sunken work (Thenius), which never can be the meaning of מוֹרָד, but pendant work, festoons, by which, however, we cannot understand festoons hanging *freely*, or floating in the air.—Ver. 30. "Every stool had four brazen wheels and brazen axles, and the four feet thereof had shoulder-pieces; below the basin were the shoulder-pieces cast, beyond each one (were) wreaths." The meaning is that the square chests stood upon axles with wheels of brass, after the style of ordinary carriage wheels (ver. 33), so that they could be driven or easily moved from one place to another; and that they did not rest directly upon the axles, but stood upon four feet, which were fastened upon the axles. This raised the chest above the rim of the wheels, so that not only were the sides of the chest which were ornamented with figures left uncovered, but, according to ver. 32, the wheels stood below the panels, and not, as in ordinary carriages, at the side of the chest. With regard to the connection between the axles and the wheels, Gesenius (*Thes.* p. 972) and Thenius suppose that the axles were fastened to the wheels, as in the Roman *plaustra* and at the present day in Italy, so as to turn with them; and Thenius argues in support of this, that לָהֶם is to be connected not only with what immediately precedes, but also with סַרְנֵי נְחֹשֶׁת. But this latter is unfounded; and the idea is altogether irreconcilable with the fact that the wheels had naves (חִשֻּׁקִים,

ver. 33), from which we must infer that they revolved upon the axles. The words וְאַרְבַּעָה פַּעֲמֹתָיו כְּתֵפֹת לָהֶם are ambiguous. They may either be rendered, "and its four feet had shoulder-pieces," or, as Thenius supposes, "and its four feet served as shoulder-pieces." פְּעָמֹת means stepping feet, feet bent out as if for stepping (Ex, xxv. 12). The suffix attached to פעמתיו refers to מְכוֹנָה, the masculine being often used indefinitely instead of the feminine, as in לָהֶם in ver. 28. Thenius compares these feet to the ἁμαξόποδες of the Greeks, and imagines that they were divided below, like fork-shaped upright contrivances, in which, as in forks, the wheels turned with the axles, so that the axle-peg, which projected outwards, had a special apparatus, instead of the usual pin, in the form of a stirrup-like and on the lower side hand-shaped holder (יָד), which was fastened to the lower rim of the מְכוֹנָה, and descended perpendicularly so as to cover the foot, and the general arrangement of the wheels themselves received greater strength in consequence. These feet, which were divided in the shape of forks, are supposed to be called כְּתֵפֹת (shoulders), because they were not attached underneath at the edge of the stand, but being cast with the corner rims passed down in the inner angles, so that their uppermost portion was *under the basin*, and the lowest portion was under the stand, which we are to picture to ourselves as without a bottom, and projecting as a split foot, held the wheel, and so formed its shoulder-pieces. But we cannot regard this representation as either in accordance with the text, or as really correct. Even if כְּתֵפֹת לָהֶם could in any case be grammatically rendered, "they served them (the wheels and axles) as shoulders," although it would be a very questionable course to take לָהֶם in a different sense here from that which it bears in the perfectly similar construction in ver. 28, the feet which carried the stand could not possibly be called the shoulders of the wheels and their axles, since they did not carry the wheels, but the מְכוֹנָה. Moreover, this idea is irreconcilable with the following words: "below the basin were the shoulder-pieces cast." If, for example, as Thenius assumes, the *mechonah* had a cover which was arched like a dome, and had a neck in the centre into which the basin was inserted by its lower rim, the shoulder-pieces, supposing that they were cast upon the inner borders of the chest, would not be *below the basin*, but simply below the corners of the lid of the chest, so that they would stand in no direct relation whatever to the basin. We must therefore give the preference to the rendering, which is grammatically the most natural one, "and its feet had shoulder-pieces," and understand the words as signifying that from the feet, which descended of course from the four corner borders of the chest down to the axles, there ascended shoulder-pieces, which ran along the outside of the chest and reached to the lower part of the basin which was upon the lid of the chest, and as shoulders either supported or helped to support it. According to ver. 34, these shoulder-pieces were so cast upon the four corners of the chest, that they sprang out of it as it were. מֵעֵבֶר אִישׁ לֹיוֹת, opposite to each one were wreaths. Where these festoons were attached, the various senses in which מֵעֵבֶר is used prevent our deciding with certainty. At any rate, we must reject the alteration proposed by Thenius, of לֹיוֹת into לְאֶחָת, for the simple reason that אִישׁ לְאֶחָת in the sense of "one to the other" would not be Hebraic.—In ver. 31 we have a description of the upper portion of the *mechonah*, which formed the pedestal for the basin, and therewith an explanation of מִתַּחַת לַכִּיֹּר. "And the mouth of it (the basin) was within the crown and upwards with a cubit, and the mouth of it (the crown) was rounded, stand-work, a cubit and a half (wide), and on its mouth also there was engraved work, and its panels were square, not round." To understand this verse, we must observe that, according to ver. 35, the *mechonah* chest was provided at the top with a dome-shaped covering, in the centre of which there was an elevation resembling the capital of a pillar (הַכֹּתֶרֶת, the crown), supporting the basin, which was inserted into it by its lower rim. The suffix in פִּיהוּ (its mouth) is supposed by Thenius to refer to the *mechonah* chest, and he questions the allusion to the basin, on the ground that this was so flat that a *mouth*-like opening could not possibly be spoken of, and the basins were never within the *mechonah.* But however correct these two remarks may be in themselves, they by no means demonstrate the necessity of taking פִּיהוּ as referring to the *mechonah* chest. For פֶּה (the mouth) is not necessarily to be understood as denoting a mouth-like opening to the basin; but just as פִּי רֹאשׁ in Ex. xxviii. 32 signifies the opening of the clothes for the head, *i.e.* for putting the head through when putting on the clothes, so may פִּיהוּ (its mouth) be the opening or mouth for the basin, *i.e.* the opening into which the basin fitted and was emptied, the water in the basin being let off into the *mechonah* chest through the head-shaped neck by means of a tap or plug. The mouth was really the lower or contracted portion of the shell-shaped basin, which was about a cubit in height within the neck and upwards, that is to say, in all, inasmuch as it went partly into the neck and rose in part above it. The פִּיהָ (the mouth thereof) which follows is the (upper) opening of the crown-like neck of the lid of the *mechonah*. This was rounded, מַעֲשֵׂה־כֵן, stand-work, *i.e.*, according to De Wette's correct paraphrase, formed after the style of the foot of a pillar, a cubit and a half in diameter. "And *also* upon the mouth of it (the *mechonah*) was carved work." The גַּם (also) refers to the fact that the sides of the *mechonah* were already ornamented with carving. מִסְגְּרֹתֵיהֶם, the panels of the crown-like neck (כֹּתֶרֶת) and its mouth (פִּיהָ) were square, like the panels of the sides of the *mechonah* chest. The fact that panels are spoken of in connection with this neck, may be explained on the assumption that with its height of one cubit and its circumference of almost five cubits (which follows from its having a diameter of a cubit and a half) it had stronger borders of brass to strengthen its bearing power, while between them it consisted of thinner plates, which are called fillings or panels.—In vers. 32, 33, the wheels are more minutely described. Every stool had four wheels under the panels, *i.e.* not against the sides of the chest, but under them, and יָדוֹת, hands or holders of the wheels, *i.e.* special contrivances for fastening the wheels to the axles, probably larger and more artistically worked than the linch-pins of ordinary carriages. These יָדוֹת were only required when the wheels turned upon the axles, and not when they were fastened *to* them. The height of the wheel was a cubit and a half, *i.e.* not half the height, but the whole. For with a half height of a cubit and a half the wheels would have been three cubits in diameter; and as the chest was only four cubits long, the hinder wheels and front wheels would almost have touched one another. The work (construction) of the wheels resembled that of (ordinary) carriage wheels; but everything about them (holders, felloes, spokes, and naves) was cast in brass.—In ver. 34 the description passes to the upper portion of the *mechonah*. "And he made four shoulder-pieces at the four corners of one (*i.e.* of every) stand; out of the stand were its shoulder-pieces." כְּתֵפוֹת are the shoulder-pieces already mentioned in ver. 30, which were attached to the feet below, or which terminated in feet. They were fastened to the corners in such a way that they seemed to come out of them; and they rose above the corners with a slight inclination (curve) towards the middle of the neck or capital, till they came under the outer rim of the basin which rested upon the capital of the lid of the chest, so as to support the basin, which turned considerably outwards at the top.—Ver. 35. " And on the upper part of the stand (the *mechonah* chest) half a cubit high was rounded all round, and on the upper part were its holders, and its panels out of it. רֹאשׁ הַמְּכוֹנָה is the upper portion of the square chest. This was not flat, but rounded, *i.e.* arched, so that the arching rose half a cubit high above the height of the sides. This arched covering (or lid) had יָדוֹת, holders, and panels, which were therefore upon the upper part of the מְכוֹנָה. The *holders* we take to be strong broad borders of brass, which gave the lid the necessary firmness; and the fillings or panels are the thinner plates of brass between them. They were both מִמֶּנָּה, " out of it," out of the upper part of the *mechonah, i.e.* cast along with it. With regard to the decoration of it, ver. 36 states that " he cut out (engraved) upon the plates of its holders, and upon its panels, cherubim, lions, and palms, according to the empty space of every one, and wreaths all round." We cannot determine anything further with regard to the distribution of these figures.—Vers. 37, 38. " Thus he made the ten stools of one kind of casting, measure, and form, and also ten brazen basins (כִּיֹּרוֹת), each holding forty baths, and each basin four cubits." In a round vessel this can only be understood of the diameter, not of the height or depth, as the basins were set upon (עַל) the stands. כִּיּוֹר אֶחָד עַל־הַמְּכוֹנָה is dependent upon וַיַּעַשׂ: he made ten basins, . . . one basin upon a stand for the ten stands, *i.e.* one basin for each stand. If then the basins were a cubit in diameter at the top, and therefore their size corresponded almost exactly to the length and breadth of the stand, whilst the crown-like neck, into which they were inserted, was only a cubit and a half in diameter (ver. 31), their shape must have resembled that of wide-spreading shells. And the form thus given to them required the shoulder-pieces described in vers. 30 and 34 as supports beneath the outer rim of the basins, to prevent their upsetting when the carriage was wheeled about.[1]—Ver. 39. And he put the stands five on the right side of the house and five on the left; and the (brazen) sea he put upon the right side eastwards, opposite to the south. The right side is the south side, and the left the north side. Consequently the stands were not placed on the right and left, *i.e.* on each side of the altar of burnt-offering, but on each side of the house, *i.e.* of the temple-hall; while the brazen sea stood farther forward between the hall and the altar, only more towards the south, *i.e.* to the south-east of the hall and the south-west of the altar of burnt-offering. The basins upon the stands were for washing (according to 2 Chron. iv. 6), namely, "the work of the burnt-offering," that is to say, for cleansing the flesh and fat, which were to be consumed upon the altar of burnt-offering. By means of the stands on wheels, they could not only easily bring the water required near to the priests who were engaged in preparing the sacrifices, but could also let down the dirty water into the chest of the stand by means of a special contrivance introduced for the purpose, and afterwards take it away. As the introduction of carriages for the basins arose from the necessities of the altar-service, so the preparation of ten such stands, and the size of the basins, was occasioned by the greater extension of the sacrificial worship, in which it often happened that a considerable number of sacrifices had to be made ready for the altar at the same time. The artistic work of these stands and their decoration with figures were intended to show that these vessels were set apart for the service of the sanctuary. The emblems are to some extent the same as those on the walls of the sanctuary, viz. cherubim, palms, and flowers, which had therefore naturally the same meaning here as they had there; the only difference being that they were executed there in gold, whereas here they were in brass, to correspond to the character of the court. Moreover, there were also figures of lions and oxen, pointing no doubt to the royal and priestly characters, which were combined,

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[1] The description which Ewald has given of these stands in his *Geschichte*, iii. pp. 311, 312, and still more elaborately in an article in the *Göttingen*

Gelehrten Nachr. 1859, pp. 131–146, is not only obscure, but almost entirely erroneous, since he proposes in the most arbitrary way to make several alterations in the biblical text, on the assumption that the Solomonian stands were constructed just like the small bronze four-wheeled kettle-carriages (hardly a foot in size) which have been discovered in Mecklenburg, Steyermark, and other places of Europe. See on this subject G. C. F. Lisch, "über die ehernen Wagenbecken der Bronzezeit," in the *Jahrbb. des Vereins f. Mecklenb. Geschichte*, ix. pp. 373, 374, where a sketch of a small carriage of this kind is given.

according to Ex. xix. 6, in the nation worshipping the Lord in this place.

Vers. 40–51. *Summary enumeration of the other vessels of the temple.*—In ver. 40 the brazen vessels of the court are given. In vers. 41–47 the several portions of the brazen pillars, the stands and basins, the brazen sea and the smaller vessels of brass, are mentioned once more, together with notices of the nature, casting, and quantity of the metal used for making them. And in vers. 48–50 we have the golden vessels of the Holy Place. This section agrees almost word for word with 2 Chron. iv. 11–v. 1, where, moreover, not only is the arrangement observed in the previous description of the temple-building a different one, but the making of the brazen altar of burnt-offering, of the golden candlesticks, and of the table of shew-bread, and the arrangement of the great court (2 Chron. iv. 7–9) are also described, to which there is no allusion whatever in the account before us; so that these notices in the Chronicles fill up an actual gap in the description of the building of the temple which is given here.—Ver. 40*a*. *The smaller brazen vessels.*—Hiram made the pots, shovels, and bowls. הַכִּיֹּרוֹת is a slip of the pen for הַסִּירוֹת, pots, as we may see by comparing it with ver. 45 and the parallel passages 2 Chron. iv. 11 and 2 Kings xxv. 14. The pots were used for carrying away the ashes; הַיָּעִים, the shovels, for clearing the ashes from the altar; הַמִּזְרָקוֹת were the bowls used for catching the blood, when the sacrificial animals were slaughtered: compare Ex. xxvii. 3 and Num. iv. 14, where forks and fire-basins or coal-pans are also mentioned.—Ver. 40*b* introduces the recapitulation of all the vessels made by Hiram. בֵּית יְהוָֹה, in the house of the Lord (cf. Ewald, § 300, *b*); in 2 Chron. iv. 11 more clearly, בְּבֵית י״; we find it also in ver. 45; for which we have in 2 Chron. iv. 16 לְבֵית יְהוָֹה, for the house of Jehovah. The several objects enumerated in vers. 41–45 are accusatives governed by לַעֲשׂוֹת.—Vers. 41–44, the brazen pillars with the several portions of their capitals; see at vers. 15–22. The inappropriate expression עַל־פְּנֵי הָעַמֻּדִים (upon the face of the pillars) in ver. 42 is probably a mistake for עַל־שְׁנֵי הע׳, "upon the two pillars," for it could not properly be said of the capitals that they were upon the surface of the pillars.—Ver. 43. The ten stands and their basins: see at vers. 27–37; ver. 44, the brazen sea: *vid.* vers. 23–26; lastly, ver. 45, the pots, etc., as at ver. 40. The *Chethîb* האהל is a mistake for הָאֵלֶּה (*Keri*).[1] נְחֹשֶׁת מְמֹרָט, of polished brass—accusative of the material governed by עָשָׂה.—Ver. 46. "In the Jordan valley he cast them—in thickened earth between Succoth and Zarthan," where the ground, according to Burckhardt, *Syr.* ii. p. 593, is marly throughout. בְּמַעֲבֵה הָאֲדָמָה, "by thickening of the earth," the forms being made in the ground by stamping together the clayey soil. *Succoth* was on the other side of the Jordan,—not, however, at the ford near Bethsean (Thenius), but on the south side of the Jabbok (see at Judg. viii. 5 and Gen. xxxiii. 17). *Zarthan* or *Zereda* was in the Jordan valley on this side, probably at *Kurn Sartabeh* (see at Judg. vii. 22 and Josh. iii. 16). The casting-place must have been on this side of the Jordan, as the (eastern) bank on the other side has scarcely any level ground at all. The circumstance that a place on the other side is mentioned in connection with one on this side, may be explained from the fact that the two places were obliquely opposite to one another, and in the valley on this side there was no large place in the neighbourhood above Zarthan which could be appropriately introduced to define the site of the casting-place.—Ver. 47. Solomon left all these vessels of excessive number unweighed. וַיַּנַּח does not mean he laid them down (= set them up: Movers), but he let them lie, *i.e.* unweighed, as the additional clause, "the weight of the brass was not ascertained," clearly shows. This large quantity of brass, according to 1 Chron. xviii. 8, David had taken from the cities of Hadadezer, adding also the brass presented to him by Toi.—Vers. 48–50. *The golden vessels of the Holy Place* (cf. 2 Chron. iv. 19–22). The vessels enumerated here are divided, by the repetition of זָהָב סָגוּר in vers. 49 and 50, into two classes, which were made of fine gold; and to this a third class is added in ver. 50*b* which was made of gold of inferior purity. As זָהָב סָגוּר is governed in both instances by וַיַּעַשׂ as an accusative of the material, the זָהָב (gold) attached to the separate vessels must be taken as an adjective. "Solomon made all the vessels in the house of Jehovah (*i.e.* had them made): the golden altar, and the golden table on which was the shew-bread, and the candlesticks . . . of costly gold (סָגוּר: see at ch. vi. 20). *The house of Jehovah* is indeed here, as in ver. 40, the temple with its courts, and not merely the Holy Place, or the temple-house in the stricter sense; but it by no means follows from this that כָּל־הַכֵּלִים, "*all* the vessels," includes both the brazen vessels already enumerated and also the golden vessels mentioned afterwards. A decisive objection to our taking the כֹּל (all) as referring to those already enumerated as well as those which follow, is to be found in the circumstance that the sentence commencing with וַיַּעַשׂ is only concluded with זָהָב סָגוּר in ver. 49. It is evident from this that כָּל־הַכֵּלִים is particularized in the several vessels enumerated from אֵת מִזְבַּח onwards. These vessels no doubt belonged to the Holy Place or temple-house only; though this is not involved in the expression "the house of Jehovah," but is apparent from the context, or from the fact that all the vessels of the court have already been enumerated in vers. 40–46, and were made of brass, whereas the *golden* vessels follow here. That these were intended for the Holy Place is assumed as well known from the analogy of the tabernacle. אֲשֶׁר בֵּית יְהוָֹה merely affirms that the vessels mentioned afterwards belonged to the house of God, and were not prepared for the palace of Solomon or any other earthly purpose. We cannot infer from the expression "*Solomon* made" that the golden vessels were not made by Hiram the artist, as the brazen ones were (Thenius). Solomon is simply named as the builder of the temple, and the introduction of his name was primarily occasioned by ver. 47. The "golden altar" is the altar of incense in the Holy Place, which is called golden because it was overlaid with gold-plate; for, according to ch. vi. 20, its sides were covered with cedar wood, after the analogy of the golden altar in the tabernacle (Ex. xxx. 1–5). "And the table, upon which the shew-bread, of gold." זָהָב belongs to הַשֻּׁלְחָן, to which it stands in free subjection (*vid.* Ewald, § 287, *h*), signifying "the golden table." Instead of הַשֻּׁלְחָן we have הַשֻּׁלְחָנוֹת in 2 Chron. iv. 19 (the tables), because there it has already been stated in ver. 8 that ten tables were made, and put in the Holy Place. In our account that verse is omitted; and hence there is only a notice of *the* table upon which the loaves of shew-bread generally lay, just as in 2 Chron. xxix. 18, in which the chronicler does not contradict himself, as Thenius fancies. The number ten, moreover, is required and proved to be correct in the case of the tables, by the occurrence of the same number in connection with the candlesticks. In no single passage of the Old Testament is it stated that there was only one table of shew-bread in the Holy Place of Solomon's temple.[1] The tables were certainly made of wood, like the Mosaic table of shew-bread, probably of cedar wood, and only overlaid with gold (see at Ex. xxv. 23–30). "And the candlesticks, five on the right and five on the left, before the back-room." These were also made in imitation of the Mosaic candlestick (see Ex. xxv. 31 sqq.), and were probably placed not near to the party wall in a straight line to the right and left of the door leading into the Most Holy Place, but along the two longer sides of the Holy Place; and the same with the tables, except that they stood nearer to the side walls with the candlesticks in front of them, so that the whole space might be lighted more brilliantly. The altar of burnt-offering, on the contrary, stood in front of and very near to the entrance into the Most Holy Place (see at ch. vi. 20).—In the following clause (vers. 49*b* and 50*a*) the ornaments of the candlesticks are mentioned first, and then the rest of the smaller golden vessels are enumerated. הַפֶּרַח, the flower-work, with which the candlesticks were ornamented (see Ex. xxv. 33). The word is evidently used collectively here, so that the גְּבִיעִים mentioned along with them in the book of Exodus (*l.c.*) are included. הַנֵּרֹת, the lamps, which were placed upon the shaft and arms of the candlestick (Ex. xxv. 37). הַמֶּלְקָחַיִם, the snuffers (Ex. xxv. 38). סִפּוֹת, basins in Ex. xii. 22, here probably deep dishes (*Schalen*). מְזַמְּרוֹת, knives. מִזְרָקוֹת, bowls (*Schalen*) or cans with spouts for the wine for the libations; according to 2 Chron. iv. 8, there were a hundred of these made. כַּפּוֹת, small flat vessels, probably for carrying the incense to the altar. מַחְתּוֹת, extinguishers; see at Ex. xxv. 38.—Ver. 50*b*. The פֹּתוֹת were also of gold, possibly of inferior quality. These were either the *hinges* of the doors, or more probably the sockets, in which the pegs of the doors turned. They were provided for the doors of the inner temple, viz. the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. We must supply *Vâv* before לְדַלְתֵי.

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[1] After וְאֵת כָּל־הַכֵּלִים הָאֵלֶּה the LXX. have the interpolation, *καὶ οἱ στῦλοι τεσσαράκοντα καὶ ὀκτὼ τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ βασιλέως καὶ τοῦ οἴκου Κυρίου*, which is proved to be apocryphal by the marvellous combination of the king's house and the house of God, though it is nevertheless regarded by Thenius as genuine, and as an interesting notice respecting certain pillars in the enclosure of the inner court of the temple, and in the king's palace!

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[1] Nothing can be learned from 2 Chron. xxix. 18 concerning the number of the vessels in the Holy Place. If we were to conclude from this passage that there were no more vessels in the Holy Place than are mentioned there, we should also have to assume, if we would not fall into a most unscientific inconsistency, that there was neither a candlestick nor a golden altar of incense in the Holy Place. The correct meaning of this passage may be gathered from the words of king Abiam in 2 Chron. xiii. 11: "We lay the shew-bread upon *the* pure table, and light *the* golden candlestick every evening;" from which it is obvious that here and there only the table and the candlestick are mentioned, because usually only one table had shew-bread upon it, and only one candlestick was lighted.

All the vessels mentioned in vers. 48 and 49 belonged to the Holy Place of the temple, and were the same as those in the tabernacle; so that the remarks made in the Comm. on Ex. xxv. 30 and 39, and xxx. 1–10, as to their purpose and signification, apply to them as well. Only the number of the tables and candlesticks was ten times greater. If a multiplication of the number of these two vessels appeared appropriate on account of the increase in the size of the room, the number was fixed at ten, to express the idea of completeness by that number. No new vessel was made for the Most Holy Place, because the Mosaic ark of the covenant was placed therein (ch. viii. 4: compare the remarks on this at Ex. xxv. 10–22).—The account of the vessels of the temple is brought to a close in ver. 51: "So was ended all the work that king Solomon made in the house of the Lord; and Solomon brought all that was consecrated by his father, (namely) the silver and the gold (which were not wrought), and the vessels he placed in the treasuries of the house of Jehovah." As so much gold and brass had already been expended upon the building, it might appear strange that Solomon should not have used up all the treasures collected by his father, but should still be able to bring a large portion of it into the treasuries of the temple. But according to 1 Chron. xxii. 14, 16, and xxix. 2 sqq., David had collected together an almost incalculable amount of gold, silver, and brass, and had also added his own private treasure and the freewill offerings of the leading men of the nation (1 Chron. xxix. 7–9). Solomon was also able to devote to the building of the temple a considerable portion of his own very large revenues (cf. ch. x. 14), so that a respectable remnant might still be left of the treasure of the sanctuary, which was not first established by David, but had been commenced by Samuel and Saul, and in which David's generals, Joab and others, had deposited a portion of the gold and silver that they had taken as booty (1 Chron. xxvi. 20–28). For it is evident that not a little had found its way into this treasure through the successful wars of David, from the fact that golden shields were taken from the generals of Hadadezer, and that these were consecrated to the Lord along with the silver, golden, and brazen vessels offered as gifts of homage by king Toi of Hamath, in addition to the gold and silver which David had consecrated from the defeated Syrians, Moabites, Ammonites, Philistines, and Amalekites (2 Sam. viii. 7, 11, 12; 1 Chron. xviii. 7, 10, 11).[1]

CHAP. VIII. DEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE.

This solemn transaction consisted of three parts, and the chapter arranges itself in three sections accordingly: viz. (*a*) the conveyance of the ark and the tabernacle, together with its vessels, into the temple, with the words spoken by Solomon on the occasion (vers. 1–21); (*b*) Solomon's dedicatory prayer (vers. 22–53); (*c*) the blessing of the congregation, and the offering of sacrifice and observance of a feast (vers. 54–66).—The parallel account to this in 2 Chron. v. 2–vii. 10, in addition to certain minor alterations of words and constructions, introduced for the most part merely for the sake of elucidation, contains here and there, and more especially towards the end, a few deviations of greater extent, partly omissions and partly additions. But in other respects it agrees almost word for word with our account.

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[1] The amazing extent to which this booty may possibly have reached, may be inferred from the accounts we have concerning the quantity of the precious metals in Syria in the Macedonian age. In the *gaza regia* of Damascus, Alexander found 2600 talents of gold and 600 talents of uncoined silver (Curt. iii. 13, 16, cf. Arrian, ii. 11, 10). In the temple of Jupiter at Antioch there was a statue of this god of solid silver fifteen cubits high (Justin, xxxix. 2, 5. 6); and in the temple at Hierapolis there was also a golden statue (Lucian, *de Dea Syr.* § 31). According to Appian (*Parth.* 28, ed. Schweigh.), this temple was so full of wealth, that Crassus spent several days in weighing the vessels of silver and gold. And from the unanimous testimony of the ancients, the treasures of the palaces and temples of Asia in the earlier times were greater still. Of the many accounts which Bähr (*Symbolik*, i. p. 258 sqq.) and Movers (*Phönizier*, ii. 3, p. 40 sqq.) have collected together on this subject, we will mention only a few here, the credibility of which cannot be disputed. According to Varro (in Plin. xxxiii. 15), Cyrus had taken 34,000 pounds of gold as booty after the conquest of Asia, beside the gold wrought into vessels and ornaments, and 500,000 talents of silver. In Susa, Alexander took 40,000, or, according to other accounts, 50,000, talents from the royal treasury; or, as it is still more definitely stated, 40,000 talents of uncoined gold and silver, and 9000 talents of coined dariks. Alexander had these brought to Ecbatana, where he accumulated 180,000 talents. Antigonus afterwards found in Susa 15,000 talents more in vessels and wrought gold and silver. In Persepolis, Alexander took 120,000 talents, and in Pasargada 6000 talents. For the proofs, see Movers, pp. 42, 43.

With regard to the time of the dedication, it is merely stated in ver. 2 that the heads of the nation assembled at Jerusalem to this feast in the seventh month. The year in which this took place is not given. But as the building of the temple was finished, according to ch. vi. 38, in the *eighth* month of the eleventh year of Solomon's reign, the dedication which followed in the *seventh* month cannot have taken place in the same year as the completion of the building. Ewald's opinion, that Solomon dedicated the building a month before it was finished, is not only extremely improbable in itself, but is directly at variance with ch. vii. 51. If we add to this, that according to ch. ix. 1–10 it was not till after the lapse of twenty years, during which he had built the two houses, the temple, and his palace, that the Lord appeared to Solomon at the dedication of the temple and promised to answer his prayer, we must decide in favour of the view held by Thenius, that the dedication of the temple did not take place till twenty years after the building of it was begun, or thirteen years after it was finished, and when Solomon had also completed the building of the palace, which occupied thirteen years, as the LXX. have indicated at the commencement of ch. viii. 1 by the interpolation of the words, *καὶ ἐγένετο ὡς συνετέλεσε Σαλωμὼν τοῦ οἰκοδομῆσαι τὸν οἶκον Κυρίου καὶ τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ μετὰ εἴκοσι ἔτη.*[1]

Vers. 1–21. The FIRST ACT of the solemnities consisted (1) in the removal of the ark of the covenant into the Most Holy Place of the temple (vers. 1–11); and (2) in the words with which Solomon celebrated the entrance of the Lord into the new temple (vers. 12–21).—Vers. 1–11. *Removal of the ark of the covenant into the temple.*—This solemn transaction was founded entirely upon the solemnities with which the ark was conveyed in the time of David from the house of Obed-edom into the holy tent upon Zion (2 Sam vi. 12 sqq.; 1 Chron. xv.

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[1] From the whole character of the Alexandrian version, there can be no doubt that these words have been transferred by the LXX. from ch. ix. 1, and have not dropped out of the Hebrew text, as Thenius supposes.

2 sqq.). Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the princes of the fathers' houses (נְשִׂיאֵי הָאָבוֹת, contracted from נְשִׂיאֵי בֵית הָאָבוֹת) of the Israelites, as representatives of the whole congregation, to himself at Jerusalem, to bring the ark of the covenant out of the city of David, *i.e.* from Mount Zion (see the Comm. on 2 Sam. vi. 16, 17), into the temple which he had built upon Moriah. (On the use of the contracted form of the imperfect יַקְהֵל after אָז, see Ewald, § 233, *b.*)—Ver. 2. Accordingly "all the men of Israel (*i.e.* the heads of the tribes and families mentioned in ver. 1) assembled together to the king in the month Ethanim, *i.e.* the seventh month, at the feast." Gesenius explains the name הָאֵתָנִים (in 55 codd. הָאֵיתָנִים) as meaning "month of the flowing brooks," after אֵיתָן in Prov. xiii. 15; Böttcher, on..the other hand, supposes it to denote the equinox. But apart from other grounds, the plural by no means favours this. Nor does the seventh month answer to the period between the middle of our September and the middle of October, as is supposed by Thenius, who founds upon this supposition the explanation already rejected by Böttcher, viz. "month of gifts;" but it corresponds to the period between the new moon of October and the new moon of November, during which the rainy season commences in Palestine (Rob. *Pal.* ii. p. 96 sqq.), so that this month may very well have received its name from the constant flowing of the brooks. The explanation, "that is the seventh month," is added, however (here as in ch. vi. 1, 38), not because the arrangement of the months was a different one before the captivity (Thenius), but because different names came into use for the months during the captivity. בֶּחָג is construed with the article: "because the feast intended was one that was well known, and had already been kept for a long time (viz. the feast of tabernacles)." The article overthrows the explanation given by Thenius, who supposes that the reference is to the festivities connected with the dedication of the temple itself.—Vers. 3, 4. After the arrival of all the elders (*i.e.* of the representatives of the nation, more particularly described in ver. 1), the priests carried the ark and brought it up (*sc.* into the temple), with the tabernacle and all the holy vessels in it. The expression וַיַּעֲלוּ אֹתָם, which follows, introduces as a supplementary notice, according to the general diffuseness of the early Hebrew style of narrative, the more precise statement that the priests and Levites brought up these

sacred vessels. אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד is not the tent erected for the ark of the covenant upon Zion, which can be proved to have been never so designated, and which is expressly distinguished from the former in 2 Chron. i. 4 as compared with ver. 3, but is the Mosaic tabernacle at Gibeon in front of which Solomon had offered sacrifice (ch. iii. 4). The tabernacle with the vessels in it, to which, however, the ark of the covenant, that had long been separated from it, did not belong, was probably preserved as a sacred relic in the rooms above the Most Holy Place. The ark of the covenant was carried by priests on all solemn occasions, according to the spirit of the law, which enjoined, in Num. iii. 31 and iv. 5 sqq., that the ark of the covenant and the rest of the sacred vessels should be carried by the Levites, after the priests had carefully wrapped them up; and the Levites were prohibited from directly touching them, on pain of death. When, therefore, the ark of the covenant was carried in solemn procession, as in the case before us, probably uncovered, this could only be done by the priests, more especially as the Levites were not allowed to enter the Most Holy Place. Consequently, by the statement in ver. 3*b*, that the priests and Levites carried *them* (אֹתָם), viz. the objects mentioned before, we are to understand that the ark of the covenant was carried into the temple by the priests, and the tabernacle with its vessels by the Levites.[1]—Ver. 5. "And king Solomon and the whole congregation, that had gathered round him, were with him before the ark sacrificing sheep and oxen in innumerable multitude." This took place while the ark of the covenant was carried up, no doubt when it was brought into the court of the temple, and was set down there for a time either within or in front of the hall. Then was this magnificent sacrifice "offered" there "in front of the ark" (לִפְנֵי הָאָרוֹן).—Ver. 6. After this sacrificing was ended, the priests carried the ark to its place, into the back-room of the house, into the Most Holy under the wings of the cherubim (already described in ch.

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[1] Instead of כֹּהֲנִים in ver. 3, we have הַלְוִיִּם in 2 Chron. v. 4; and instead of הַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַלְוִיִּם in ver. 4, we have הַכֹּהֲנִים הַלְוִיִּם, "the Levitical priests." These variations are to be attributed to inexactness in expression. For it is obvious that Thenius is wrong in his notion that the chronicler mentioned the Levites instead of the priests, from the simple fact that he states in ver. 7 that "the priests carried the ark," etc., in exact agreement with our account.

vi. 23 sqq.). The latter statement is explained in ver. 7. "For the cherubim were spreading out wings towards the place of the ark, and so covered (lit. threw a shade) over the ark and over its poles from above." If the outspread wings of the great cherubic figures threw a shade not only over the ark of the covenant, but also over its poles, the ark was probably so placed that the poles ran from north to south, and not from east to west, as they are sketched in my *Archäologie.*—Ver. 8. "And the poles were long, and there were seen their heads (*i.e.* they were so long that their heads were seen) from the Holy Place before the hinder room; but on the outside (outside the Holy Place, say in the porch) they were not seen." יַאֲרִכוּ cannot be rendered: they had lengthened the poles, from which Kimchi and others have inferred that they had made new and longer carrying-poles, since the form of the tense in this connection cannot be the pluperfect, and in that case, moreover, the object would be indicated by אֵת as in ch. iii. 14; but הֶאֱרִיךְ is used intransitively, "to be long," lit. to show length, as in Ex. xx. 12, Deut. v. 16, etc. The remark to the effect that the poles were visible, indicates that the precept of the law in Ex. xxv. 15, according to which the poles were to be left in the ark, was observed in Solomon's temple also. Any one could convince himself of this, for the poles were there "to this day." The author of our books has retained this chronological allusion as he found it in his original sources; for when he composed his work, the temple was no longer standing. It is impossible, however, to ascertain from this statement how the heads of the poles could be seen in the Holy Place,—whether from the fact that they reached the curtain and formed elevations therein, if the poles ran from front to back; or whether, if, as is more probable, they ran from south to north, the front heads were to be seen, simply when the curtain was drawn back.[1]—Ver. 9. "There was nothing in the ark but the two tables of stone, which Moses had put there at Horeb, when Jehovah concluded the covenant with Israel." The intention of this remark is also simply to show that the law, which enjoined that the ark should merely preserve the stone tables of the covenant (Ex. xxv. 16, xl. 20), had not been departed from in the lapse of time. אֲשֶׁר before כָּרַת is not a pronoun, but a conjunction: when, from the time that, as in Deut. xi. 6, etc. כָּרַת without בְּרִית, signifying the conclusion of a covenant, as in 1 Sam. xx. 16, xxii. 8, etc. *Horeb*, the general name for the place where the law was given, instead of the more definite name *Sinai*, as in Deuteronomy (see the Comm. on Ex. xix. 1, 2).[1]—Vers. 10, 11. At the dedication of the tabernacle the glory of Jehovah in the cloud filled the sanctuary, so that Moses could not enter (Ex. xl. 34, 35); and so was it now. When the priests came out of the sanctuary, after putting the ark of the covenant in its place, the cloud filled the house of Jehovah, so that the priests could not stand to minister. The signification of this fact was the same on both occasions. The cloud, as the visible symbol of the gracious presence of God, filled the temple, as a sign that Jehovah the covenant-God had entered into it, and had chosen it as the scene of His gracious manifestation in Israel. By the inability of the priests to stand, we are not to understand that the cloud drove them away; for it was not till the priests had come out that it filled the temple. It simply means that they could not remain in the Holy Place to perform service, say to offer an incense-offering upon the altar to consecrate it, just as sacrifices were offered upon the altar of burnt-offering after the dedicatory prayer (vers. 62, 63).[2]

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[1] The proof which Thenius has endeavoured to give by means of a drawing of the correctness of the latter view, is founded upon untenable assumptions (see Böttcher, *Æhrenl.* ii. p. 69). It by no means follows from the expression עַל־פְּנֵי דְּבִיר that the heads of the poles were visible as far off as the door of the Holy Place, but simply that they could be seen in the Holy Place, though not outside.

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[1] The statement in Heb. ix. 4, to the effect that the pot of manna and Aaron's rod that budded were also to be found in the ark, which is at variance with this verse, and which the earlier commentators endeavoured to bring into harmony with it by forced methods of different kinds, simply rests upon an erroneous interpretation of לִפְנֵי הָעֵדֻת in Ex. xvi. 33, 34, and Num. xvii. 25, which had become traditional among the Jews; since this merely affirms that the objects mentioned had been deposited in front of the testimony, *i.e.* in front of the ark which contained the testimony, and not within it, as the Jews supposed.—Still less are De Wette and others warranted in deducing from this verse an argument against the existence of the Mosaic book of the law in the time of Solomon, inasmuch as, according to the precept in Deut. xxxi. 26, the book of the law was not to be kept *in* the ark, but by the side of it, or near it.

[2] Bertheau's opinion (on 2 Chron. v. 14), that the priests could not remain in the hall and in front of it on account of the cloud, namely, "the cloud of smoke, which, ascending from the sacrifices burned upon the altar of burnt-offering, concealed the glory of the Lord," is decidedly erroneous. For the

The glory of the Lord, which is like a consuming fire (Ex. xxiv. 17; Deut. iv. 24, ix. 3), before which unholy man cannot stand, manifested itself in the cloud. This marvellous manifestation of the glory of God took place only at the dedication; after that the cloud was only visible in the Most Holy Place on the great day of atonement, when the high priest entered it. —The Chronicles contain a long account at this place of the playing and singing of the Levites at these solemnities (*vid.* 2 Chron. v. 12-14).

Vers. 12-21. *Solomon extols this marvellous proof of the favour of the Lord.*—Ver. 12. Then spake Solomon, "Jehovah hath spoken to dwell in the darkness." "Solomon saw that the temple was filled with a cloud, and remembered that God had been pleased to appear in a cloud in the tent of Moses also. Hence he assuredly believed that God was in this cloud also, and that, as formerly He had filled the tabernacle, so He would now fill the temple and dwell therein" (Seb. Schmidt). אָמַר יְהוָה וגו׳, which Thenius still renders incorrectly, "the Lord intends to dwell in the darkness," refers, as Rashi, C. a Lap., and others have seen, to the utterances of God in the Pentateuch concerning the manifestation of His gracious presence among His people, not merely to Lev. xvi. 2 (I will appear in the cloud), but also to Ex. xix. 9, where the Lord said to Moses, "I come to thee בְּעַב הֶעָנָן," and still more to Ex. xx. 21 and Deut. iv. 11, v. 19, according to which God came down upon Sinai בָּעֲרָפֶל. Solomon took the word עֲרָפֶל from these passages. That he meant by this the black, dark cloud which filled the temple, is perfectly obvious from the combination הֶעָנָן וְהָעֲרָפֶל in Deut. v. 19 and iv. 11.[1] Solomon saw this word of Jehovah realized in

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cloud which hindered the priests from performing the service was, according to the distinct words of the text, the cloud which filled the house; and the explanatory clause, "for the glory of the Lord filled the house of Jehovah," indicates in the most unmistakeable terms that it was the vehicle of the glory of God, and therefore was not a cloud of smoke formed by the burning sacrifices, but the cloud in which God manifested His invisible being to His people,—the very same cloud in which Jehovah was to appear above the Capporeth, when the high priest entered the Most Holy Place on the day of atonement, so that he was commanded not to enter it at all times, and, when he entered, to cover the Capporeth with the cloud of the burning incense (Lev. xvi. 2, 13).

[1] Thenius, however, has built up all kinds of untenable conjectures as to alterations of the text, upon the erroneous assumption that עָנָן means the

the filling of the temple with the cloud, and learned therefrom that the Lord would dwell in this temple. Hence, being firmly convinced of the presence of Jehovah in the cloud which filled the sanctuary, he adds in ver. 13: "I have built Thee a house to dwell in, a place for Thy seat for ever." We are not to understand עוֹלָמִים as signifying that Solomon believed that the temple built by him would stand for ever; but it is to be explained partly from the contrast to the previous abode of God in the tabernacle, which from the very nature of the case could only be a temporary one, inasmuch as a tent, such as the tabernacle was, is not only a moveable and provisional dwelling, but also a very perishable one, and partly from the promise given to David in 2 Sam vii. 14–16, that the Lord would establish the throne of his kingdom for his seed for ever. This promise involved the eternal duration of the gracious connection between God and Israel, which was embodied in the dwelling of God in the temple. This connection, from its very nature, was an eternal one; even if the earthly form, from which Solomon at that moment abstracted himself, was temporal and perishable.—Solomon had spoken these words with his face turned to the Most Holy Place. He then (ver. 14) turned his face to the congregation, which was standing in the court, and blessed it. The word "blessed" (יְבָרֵךְ) denotes the wish for a blessing with which the king greeted the assembled congregation, and introduced the praise of God which follows. —In vers. 15–21 he praises the Lord for having now fulfilled with His hand what He spake with His mouth to his father David (2 Sam. vii.).—Ver. 16. The promise of God, to choose Jerusalem as the place for the temple and David as prince, is taken freely from 2 Sam. vii. 7, 8. In 2 Chron. vi. 6, before "I chose David," we find "and I chose Jerusalem, that my name might be there;" so that the affirmation answers more precisely to the preceding negation, whereas in the account before us this middle term is omitted.—Vers. 17–19. David's intention to build the temple, and the answer of God that his son was to execute this work, are so far copied from 2 Sam. vii. 2, 12, 13, that God approves the intention of David as such. הֱטִיבֹתָ, "Thou didst well that it was in thy mind."—Vers. 20, 21.

light and radiant cloud, and cannot be synonymous with עֲרָפֶל. Böttcher adopts the same opinion, without taking any notice of the striking remarks of Bertheau on 2 Chron. v. 14.

" And Jehovah has set up His word." וַיָּקֶם וגו׳ supplies the explanation of מִלֵּא בְיָדוֹ (hath fulfilled with his hand) in ver. 15. God had caused Solomon to take possession of the throne of David; and Solomon had built the temple and prepared a place there for the ark of the covenant. The ark is thereby declared to be the kernel and star of the temple, because it was the throne of the glory of God.

Vers. 22–53. SECOND ACT of the feast of dedication: *Solomon's dedicatory prayer* (cf. 2 Chron. vi. 12–42).—Ver. 22. "Then Solomon stood before the altar of Jehovah in front of all the assembly of Israel, and stretched out his hands towards heaven." It is evident from ver. 54 that Solomon uttered the prayer which follows upon his knees. The Chronicles contain the same account as we have here, with this addition, that it is said to have taken place on a " scaffold," or kind of pulpit (כִּיּוֹר) specially erected for the purpose.[1] The altar, to the front of which Solomon went, was the altar of burnt-offering in the court, where the congregation was gathered together. The expression נֶגֶד כָּל־קְהַל יִשׂ׳ favours the idea that Solomon offered the prayer upon his knees with his face turned towards the congregation, and not with his back to the people and his face turned towards the temple, as Thenius supposes.—The substance of the prayer is closely connected with the prayer of Moses, especially with the blessings and curses therein (*vid.* Lev. xxvi. and Deut. xxviii.). Commencing with the praise of God, who " keepeth covenant and truth " towards His servants, and has thus far performed to His servant David the promise that He gave him (vers. 23, 24), Solomon entreats the Lord still further to fulfil this promise of His (vers. 25, 26), and to keep His eyes constantly open over the temple, to hearken to the prayers of His people, and to avert the curse threatened against sinners from all who shall call upon Him in this temple (vers. 27–53).—Vers. 23, 24. By granting the blessing promised to His people, the Lord has hitherto proved Himself to be the true and only God in heaven and on earth, who keepeth covenant and mercy with those who walk before Him with all their heart. This acknowledgment produces the requisite confidence for offering the prayer which is sure of an answer (Matt. xxi. 22; Mark xi. 24; Jas. i. 6). For אֵין־כָּמוֹךָ אל׳, compare Ex. xv. 11 with Deut. iv. 39; 2 Sam. vii. 22, xxii. 32; Ps. lxxxvi. 8. "Who keepeth covenant and mercy," *verbatim* the same as in Deut. vii. 9. The promise given to His servant David (2 Sam. vii.), the fulfilment of which the commencement now lay before their eyes (cf. vers. 20, 21), was an emanation from the covenant faithfulness of God. "As it is this day," as in ch. iii. 6.—Ver. 25. The expression "and now" (וְעַתָּה) introduces the prayer for the further fulfilment of the promise, never to allow a successor upon the throne to be wanting to David, in the same conditional form in which David had uttered the hope in ch. ii. 4, and in which the Lord had renewed the promise to Solomon during the building of the temple (ch. vi. 12, 13). In מִלְּפָנַי יֹשֵׁב עַל־כִּסֵּא, instead of מֵעַל כִּסֵּא in ch. ii. 4, the divine rejection is more distinctly indicated.—Ver. 26 is not merely a repetition of the prayer in ver. 25, as Thenius supposes, but forms the introduction to the prayers which follow for the hearing of all the prayers presented before the Lord in the temple. The words, "let Thy words be verified, which Thou spakest unto Thy servant David," contain something more than a prayer for the continual preservation of the descendants of David upon the throne, for the fulfilment of which Solomon prayed in ver. 25. They refer to the whole of the promise in 2 Sam. vii. 12–16. The plural דְּבָרֶיךָ (*Chethîb*) points back to כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים in 2 Sam. vii. 17, and is not to be altered into the singular after the *Keri*. The singular יֵאָמֵן is used as it frequently is with the subject in the plural, when the verb precedes (cf. Ewald, § 316, *a*, 1). Solomon has here in mind one particular point in the promise, viz. that God would not withdraw His mercy from the seed of David, even when it sinned. This is evident from what follows, where he mentions simply cases of transgression, and prays that they may be forgiven.—Vers. 26–28 sqq. are closely connected in this sense: keep Thy words that were spoken to David; for although this temple cannot hold Thine infinite divine nature, I know that Thou wilt have respect to the prayer of Thy servant, to keep Thine eyes open over this temple, to hear every prayer which

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[1] Böttcher is right in his assertion, that the opinion expressed by Thenius and Cappellus, that this passage in the Chronicles has been dropped out of our text through a copyist's oversight, is a very improbable one; although the reasons he assigns are for the most part untenable. The omission may be explained in a very simple manner, from the fact that the introduction of this circumstance had no bearing upon the design or contents of the dedicatory prayer.

Thy people shall bring before Thee therein. וּפָנִיתָ in ver. 28 continues the optative יֵאָמֶן נָא in ver. 26; and ver. 27 contains an intermediate thought, with which Solomon meets certain contracted ideas of the gracious presence of God in the temple. כִּי (ver. 27) signifies neither but, nevertheless, *atqui* (Böttcher), nor "as" (Thenius, Bertheau); and the assertion that ver. 27 is the commencement of a new section is overthrown by the inadmissible rendering of וּפָנִיתָ, "but Thou turnest Thyself" (Thenius).—With the words, "Should God really dwell upon the earth! behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens (*i.e.* the heavens in their widest extent, cf. Deut. x. 14) cannot contain Thee, to say nothing (אַף כִּי; cf. Ewald, § 354, *c*) of this house which I have built," in which the infinitude of God and His exaltation above the world are expressed as clearly and forcibly as possible, Solomon does not intend to guard against the delusion that God really dwells in temples (J. D. Mich.), but simply to meet the erroneous idea that He dwells in the temple as men dwell in a house, namely, shut up within it, and not also outside and above it,—a delusion which sometimes forced its way into the unspiritual nation, but which was always attacked by the prophets (cf. Mic. iii. 11; Jer. vii. 4, etc.). For it is evident that Solomon did combine with his clear perception of the infinite exaltation of God a firm belief in His real presence in the temple, and did not do homage to the abstract idealism of the rationalists, not merely from his declaration in vers. 12 sqq. that he had built this temple as a dwelling-place for God, but also from the substance of all the following prayers, and primarily from the general prayer in vers. 28 and 29, that God would take this temple under His special protection, and hearken to every prayer directed towards it. The distinction between תְּפִלָּה, תְּחִנָּה, and רִנָּה is the following: תְּפִלָּה denotes prayer in general, praise, supplication, and thanksgiving; תְּחִנָּה, supplication or entreaty, prayer for help and mercy; and רִנָּה, jubilation, prayer as the joyous utterance of praise and thanksgiving.—Ver. 29. "That Thine eyes may be open upon this house night and day." אֶל־הַבַּיִת, *speciali quadam providentia in hanc domum directi* (Mich.). The following clause, "upon the place of which Thou hast said, My name shall be there" (namely, 2 Sam. vii. 13, *implicite*), contains within itself the ground upon which the prayer rests. Because the name of God will be in the temple, *i.e.* because God will manifest His gracious presence there, He will also keep His eyes open upon it, so as to hear the prayer of Solomon directed towards it. אֶל הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה (toward this place): because Solomon also was praying in the court towards the temple.—In ver. 30, "and hear the supplication of Thy servant and of Thy people Israel," he begins by asking that those prayers may be heard which the king and people shall henceforth bring before God in the temple. וְשָׁמַעְתָּ corresponds to וּפָנִיתָ in ver. 28, and is more precisely defined by the following וְאַתָּה תִּשְׁמַע (as for these prayers), Thou wilt hear them up to the place of Thine abode, to heaven. שָׁמַע אֶל is a pregnant expression: to hear the prayer, which ascends to heaven. In the Chronicles we find throughout the explanatory מִן. The last words, "hear and forgive," must be left in their general form, and not limited by anything to be supplied. Nothing but forgiveness of sin can remove the curse by which transgression is followed.

This general prayer is then particularized from ver. 31 onwards by the introduction of *seven* special petitions for an answer in the different cases in which, in future, prayers may be offered to God in the temple. The *first* prayer (vers. 31, 32) has reference to the oaths sworn in the temple, the sanctity of which God is asked to protect. "If a man sin against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him, to cause him to swear, and he come (and) swear before the altar in this house, then wilt Thou hear," etc. אֵת אֲשֶׁר does not mean either "granted that" (Thenius) or "just *when*" (Ewald, § 533, *a*), although אִם is used in the Chronicles, and we might render it freely "*when*;" but אֵת is simply an accusative particle, serving to introduce the following clause, in the sense of "as for," or "with regard to (such a case as) that a man sins" (*vid.* Ewald, § 277, *a*). וּבָא אָלָה cannot be taken as anything but an *asyndeton.* For if אָלָה were a substantive, it would have the article (הָאָלָה) provided it were the subject, and the verb would be written בָּאָה; and if it were the object, we should have בְּאָלָה, as in Neh. x. 30 (cf. Ezek. xvii. 13). The prayer refers to the cases mentioned in Ex. xxii. 6–12 and Lev. v. 21–24, when property entrusted to any one had been lost or injured, or when a thing had been found and the finding was denied, or when an act of fraud had been committed; in which cases the law required not only compensation with the addition of a fifth of its value, but also a trespass-offering as an expiation of the sin committed by taking a false oath. But as this punishment could only be inflicted when the guilty person afterwards confessed his guilt, many false oaths might have been sworn in the cases in question and have remained unpunished, so far as men were concerned. Solomon therefore prays that the Lord will hear every such oath that shall have been sworn before the altar, and work (עָשִׂיתָ), *i.e.* actively interpose, and judge His servants, to punish the guilty and justify the innocent. The construction תִּשְׁמַע הַשָּׁמַיִם (vers. 32, 34, 36, etc.) can be explained more simply from the adverbial use of the accusative (Ewald, § 300, *b*), than from אֶל הַשָּׁמַיִם in ver. 30. תֵּת דַּרְכּוֹ בְּרֹאשׁוֹ, to give (bring) his way upon his head, *i.e.* to cause the merited punishment to fall upon him (cf. Ezek. ix. 10, xi. 21, etc.). הַרְשִׁיעַ רָשָׁע and הַצְדִּיק צַדִּיק recall Deut. xxv. 2. For תֵּת לוֹ כְּצִדְקָתוֹ compare 2 Sam. xxii. 21, 25.—The following cases are all taken from Lev. xxvi. and Deut. xxviii.

Vers. 33 and 34. The *second* petition,—"If Thy people Israel are smitten by the enemy, because they have sinned against Thee, and they turn to Thee and confess Thy name, . . . then hear . . . and bring them back into the land,"—refers to the threatenings in Lev. xxvi. 17 and Deut. xxviii. 25, where the nation is threatened with defeat and subjugation on the part of enemies, who shall invade the land, in which case prisoners of war are carried away into foreign lands, but the mass of the people remain in the land, so that they who are beaten can pray to the Lord in the temple, that He will forgive them their sin, save them out of the power of the enemy, and bring back the captives and fugitives into their fatherland.

Vers. 35 and 36. The *third* prayer refers to the remission of the punishment of drought threatened against the land, when the heaven is shut up, according to Lev. xxvi. 19, Deut. xi. 17, xxviii. 23. כִּי תְעַנֵּם, because Thou humblest them (LXX., Vulg.); not "that Thou hearest them" (Chald. and others). כִּי תוֹרֵם, because Thou teachest them the good way. These words correspond to כי תענם, and contain a motive for forgiveness. Because God teaches His people and seeks by means of chastisements to bring them back to the good way when they fail to keep His commandments, He must forgive when they recognise the punishment as a divine chastisement and come to Him with penitential prayer.

Vers. 37-40. The *fourth* prayer relates to the removal of other land-plagues: famine (Lev. xxvi. 19, 20, and 26; Deut. xxviii. 23); pestilence (Lev. xxvi. 25); blight and mildew in the corn (Deut. xxviii. 22); locusts (חָסִיל, devourer, is connected with אַרְבֶּה without a copula,—in the Chronicles by *Vâv*,—to depict the plague of locusts more vividly before their eyes after Deut. xxviii. 38); oppression by enemies in their own land; lastly, plagues and diseases of all kinds, such as are threatened against the rebellious in Lev. xxvi. 16 and Deut. xxviii. 59–61. יָצַר is not the imperfect *Kal* of צוּר (Ges., Dietr., Fürst, Olsh. *Gramm.* p. 524), but the imperfect *Hiphil* of הֵצַר in Deut. xxviii. 52, as in Neh. ix. 27; and the difficult expression בְּאֶרֶץ שְׁעָרָיו is probably to be altered into בְּאֶרֶץ ש׳, whilst שְׁעָרָיו is either to be taken as a second object to יָצַר, as Luther supposes, or as in apposition to בְּאֶרֶץ, in the land (in) his gates, as Bertheau assumes. The assertion of Thenius, that all the versions except the Vulgate are founded upon the reading בְּאַחַת עָרָיו, is incorrect. כִּי יִהְיֶה is omitted after כָּל־מַחֲלָה, since Solomon dropped the construction with which he commenced, and therefore briefly summed up all thé prayers, addressed to God under the various chastisements here named, in the expression כָּל־תְּפִלָּה כָּל־תְּחִנָּה, which is placed absolutely at the opening of ver. 38. אֲשֶׁר יֵדְעוּן וגו׳, "when they perceive each one the stroke of his heart," *i.e.* not *dolor animi quem quisque sentit* (Vatab., C. a Lap.), but the plague regarded as a blow falling upon the heart, in other words, as a chastisement inflicted upon him by God. In all these cases may God hear his prayer, and do and give to every one according to his way. אֲשֶׁר תֵּדַע, "as Thou knowest his heart," *i.e.* as is profitable for every one according to the state of his heart or his disposition. God can do this, because He knows the hearts of all men (cf. Jer. xvii. 10). The purpose assigned for all this hearing of prayer (ver. 40), viz. "that they may fear Thee," etc., is the same as in Deut. iv. 10.

Vers. 41–43. The *fifth* prayer has reference to the hearing of the prayers of foreigners, who shall pray in the temple. Solomon assumes as certain that foreigners will come and worship before Jehovah in His temple; even Moses himself had allowed the foreigners living among the Israelites to offer sacrifice at the temple (Num. xv. 14 sqq.), and the great name and the arm of the Lord, that had manifested itself in deeds of omnipotence, had become known in the times of Moses to the surrounding nations (Ex. xv. 14, xviii. 1; Josh. v. 1), and the report of this had reached Balaam even in Mesopotamia (see the Comm. on Num. xxii.). אֶל הַנָּכְרִי does not mean "as for the foreigners" (Thenius), for אֶל is never used in this sense; but it is to be connected with תִּשְׁמַע in ver. 43, as שָׁמַע אֶל frequently occurs (Bertheau).—Ver. 42 is a parenthesis inserted in explanation of לְמַעַן שְׁמֶךָ: "for they will hear," etc. The strong hand and the outstretched arm are connected together as a standing expression for the wondrous manifestations of the divine omnipotence in the guidance of Israel, as in Deut. iv. 34, v. 15, etc. With וּבָא וְהִתְפַּלֵּל the וּבָא מֵאֶרֶץ in ver. 41 is resumed, and the main thought continued.—Ver. 43. The reason for the hearing of the prayers of foreigners is "that all nations may know Thy name to fear Thee," etc., as in Deut. xxviii. 10. An examination of this original passage, from which כִּי־שִׁמְךָ נִקְרָא עַל וגו׳ is taken and transferred to the temple, shows that the common explanations of this phrase, viz. "that this house is called after Thy name," or "that Thy name is invoked over this temple (at its dedication)," are erroneous. The name of the Lord is always used in the Scriptures to denote the working of God among His people or in His kingdom (see at 2 Sam. vi. 2). The naming of this name over the nation, the temple, etc., presupposes the working of God within it, and denotes the confession and acknowledgment of that working. This is obvious from such passages as Jer. xiv. 9, where the expression "Thy name is called over us" is only a further explanation of the word "Thou art in the midst of us;" and from Isa. lxiii. 19, where "we are they over whom Thou hast not ruled from eternity" is equivalent to "over whom Thy name has not been called." The name of Jehovah will be named over the temple, when Jehovah manifests His gracious presence within it in such a manner, that the nations who pray towards it experience the working of the living God within His sanctuary. It is in this sense that it is stated in 2 Sam. vi. 2 that the name of Jehovah is named above the ark of the covenant (see the Comm. *in loc.*).—There are no cases on record of the worship of foreigners in connection with Solomon's temple, though there are in connection with the temple built after the captivity (*vid.* Josephus, *Ant.* xi. 8, 5, that of Alexander the Great; xii. 2, 5 sqq., that of Ptolemæus Philadelphus; and 2 Macc. iii. 2, 3, that of Seleucus).

Finally, in vers. 44–50 Solomon also asks, that when prayers are directed towards the temple by those who are far away both from Jerusalem and the temple, they may be heard. The *sixth* case, in vers. 44 and 45, is, if Israel should be engaged in war with an enemy by the appointment of God; and the *seventh*, in vers. 46–50, is, if it should be carried away by enemies on account of its sins.[1] By the expression in ver. 44, "in the way which Thou sendest them," the war is described as one undertaken by the direction of God, whether waged against an enemy who has invaded the land, or outside the land of Canaan for the chastisement of the heathen dwelling around them. "And shall pray דֶּרֶךְ הָעִיר וגו׳:" *i.e.* in the direction towards the chosen city and the temple, namely, in faith in the actual presence of the covenant God in the temple. אֶל יְהוָֹה, "to Jehovah," instead of "to Thee," is probably introduced for the sake of greater clearness. וְעָשִׂיתָ מִשְׁפָּטָם, and secure them justice (cf. Deut. x. 18, Ps. ix. 5, etc.).—Vers. 46 sqq. In the seventh prayer, viz. if Israel should be given up to its enemies on account of its sins and carried away into the land of the enemy, Solomon had the threat in Lev. xxvi. 33 and 44 in his eye, though he does not confine his prayer to the exile of the whole nation foretold in that passage and in Deut. xxviii. 45 sqq., 64 sqq., and xxx. 1–5, but extends it to every case of transportation to an enemy's land. וְהֵשִׁיבוּ אֶל לִבָּם, "and they take it to heart," compare Deut. iv. 39, and without the object, Deut. xxx. 1; not "they feel remorse," as Thenius supposes, because the *Hiphil* cannot have this reflective signification (Böttcher). The confession of sin in ver. 47, חָטָאנוּ וְהֶעֱוִינוּ רָשָׁעְנוּ, was adopted by the Jews when in captivity as the most exhaustive expression of their deep consciousness of guilt (Dan. ix. 5; Ps. cvi. 6). חָטָא, to slip, *labi*, depicts sin as a wandering from right;

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[1] Bertheau (on Chron.) has already proved that there is no force in the arguments by which Thenius attempts to show, on doctrinal grounds, that vers. 44–51 are an interpolated addition. As he correctly observes, "it is, on the contrary, quite in harmony with the original plan, that the two cases are also anticipated, in which the prayers of Israelites who are at a distance from the seat of the sanctuary are directed towards the temple, since it is perfectly appropriate that the prayers of the Israelites at the place of the sanctuary are mentioned first, then the prayers of foreigners at the same place, and lastly the prayers of Israelites, who, because they are not in Jerusalem, are obliged to content themselves with turning their faces towards the temple. We might also point to the fact that it is probably intentional that exactly *seven* cases are enumerated, inasmuch as in enumerations of this kind, which are not restricted by the nature of the case to any definite measure, such a number as seven easily furnishes an outward limit,"—or more correctly: because seven as a sacred or covenant number was more appropriate than any other to embrace *all* prayers addressed to God.

הֶעֱוָה, to act perversely, as a conscious perversion of justice; and רָשַׁע as a passionate rebellion against God (cf. Isa. lvii. 20).—Ver. 50. וּנְתַתָּם לְרַחֲמִים: literally, "and make (place) them for compassion before their captors, that they may have compassion upon them," *i.e.* cause them to meet with compassion from their enemies, who have carried them away.—In vers. 51–53 Solomon closes with general reasons, which should secure the hearing of his prayer on the part of God. Bertheau follows the earlier commentators in admitting that these reasons refer not merely to the last petitions, but to all the preceding ones.[1] The plea "for they are Thy people," etc. (ver. 51), is taken from Deut. iv. 10; and that in ver. 53, "Thou didst separate them," etc., is taken from Lev. xx. 24, 26, compared with Ex. xix. 5. לִהְיוֹת עֵינֶיךָ וגו׳, "that Thine eyes may be opened," follows upon וְשָׁמַעְתָּ ("then hear Thou") in ver. 49; just as ver. 29 at the commencement of the prayer follows upon וּפָנִיתָ in ver. 28. The recurrence of the same expression shows that the prayer is drawing to a close, and is rounded off by a return to the thought with which it opened. "As Thou spakest by Moses" points back to Ex. xix. 5.—In 2 Chron. vi. 40–42 the conclusion of the prayer is somewhat altered, and closes with the appeal to the Lord to cause salvation and grace to go forth from the temple over His people.

Vers. 54–66. CONCLUDING ACT of the dedication of the temple. Vers. 54–61. *Blessing the congregation.*—After the conclusion of the prayer, Solomon rose up from his knees and blessed all the assembled congregation. וְכַפָּיו פְּרוּשׂוֹת is a circumstantial clause, which must be connected with the previous words and rendered thus: "from lying upon his knees *with* his hands spread out towards heaven." "And he stood," *i.e.* he came from the altar and stood nearer to the assembled congregation. The blessing begins with praise to the Lord for the fulfilment of His promises (ver. 16), and consists in the petition that the Lord will always fulfil his (Solomon's) prayers, and grant His people the promised salvation.[1]—Ver. 56. The praise of Jehovah rests, so far as the first part is concerned, upon the promise in Deut. xii. 9, 10, and upon its fulfilment in Josh. xxi. 44, 45 and xxiii. 14; and the second part is founded upon Lev. xxvi. 3–13 and Deut. xxviii. 1–14, where the "good word, which the Lord spake by Moses," is more precisely described as the blessing which the Lord had promised to His people and had hitherto bestowed upon them. He had already given Israel rest by means of Joshua when the land of Canaan was taken; but since many parts of the land still remained in the hands of the Canaanites, this rest was only fully secured to them by David's victories over all their enemies. This glorious fulfilment warranted the hope that the Lord would also fulfil in the future what He had promised His servant David (2 Sam. vii. 10), if the people themselves would only faithfully adhere to their God. Solomon therefore sums up all his wishes for the good of the kingdom in vers. 57–61 in the words, "May Jehovah our God be with us, as He was with our fathers; may He not leave us nor forsake us, to incline our heart to Himself, that we may walk in all His ways," etc.—that the evil word predicted by Moses in Lev. xxvi. 14 sqq., Deut. xxviii. 15, may not fall upon us. For ver. 57 compare Deut. xxxi. 6, 8, and Josh. i. 5. אַל יִטְּשֵׁנוּ corresponds to אַל יַרְפְּךָ in these passages. In the Pentateuch נָטַשׁ is used but once of men who forsake the Lord, viz. Deut. xxxii. 15; in other cases it is only used in the general sense of casting away, letting alone, and other similar meanings. It is first used of God, in the sense of forsaking His people, in Ps. xxvii. 9 in connection with עָזַב; and it frequently occurs afterwards in Jeremiah.—Ver. 59. May these my words, which I have prayed (vers. 25–43), be near to Jehovah our God day and night, that He may secure the right of His servant (the king) and of His people, as every day demands. דְּבַר יוֹם בְּיוֹמוֹ, as in Ex. v. 13, xvi. 4.—For ver. 60 compare ver. 43.—Ver. 61. Let your heart be שָׁלֵם עִם יי׳, wholly, undividedly devoted to the Lord (cf. ch. xi. 4, xv. 3, 14, etc.).

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[1] Seb. Schmidt has already given the following explanation: "These things which I have asked for myself and for my people do Thou, O Lord, because it is for Thy people that I have prayed, and I am their king: therefore hear Thou the prayers of Thy servant and Thy people. For in ver. 52 he makes mention of his own case and of the cases of all the rest, in which they would call upon the Lord.

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[1] This blessing is omitted from the Chronicles, because it is simply a recapitulation of the longer prayer; but instead of it we have a statement, in 2 Chron. vii. 1–4, to the effect that fire fell from heaven and consumed the burnt-offering upon the altar. This statement, which even Movers regards as a traditional, *i.e.* a legendary addition, according to his erroneous view of the sources of the Chronicles, is confirmed by the similar miracle which occurred at the dedication of the temple. It is omitted, like so many other things in the account before us, because all that was essential in this occurrence was contained *implicite* in the filling of the temple with the glory of the Lord. Just as at the consecration of the Mosaic sanctuary the Lord did not merely manifest His gracious presence through the cloud which filled the tent, but also kindled the first sacrifice with fire from heaven (Lev. ix. 24), to sanctify the altar as the legitimate place of sacrifice; so also at the temple the miraculous kindling of the first sacrifice with fire from heaven was the immediate and even necessary consequence of the filling of the temple with the cloud, in which the presence of Jehovah was embodied.

Vers. 62–66. *Sacrifices* and *feast.*—Vers. 62, 63. The dedicatory prayer was followed by a magnificent sacrifice offered by the king and all Israel. The thank-offering (זֶבַח שְׁלָמִים) consisted, in accordance with the magnitude of the manifestation of divine grace, of 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep. This enormous number of sacrificial animals, in which J. D. Michaelis found serious difficulties, Thenius endeavours to set aside as too large, by calculating that as these sacrifices were offered in seven days, reckoning the sacrificial day at twelve full hours, there must have been about five oxen and about twenty-five sheep slaughtered and offered in sacrifice every minute for the king alone. This calculation would be conclusive, if there were any foundation for the three assumptions upon which it rests: namely, (1) that the number of sacrifices mentioned was offered for the king alone; (2) that the slaughtering and preparation of the sacrificial animals could only be performed by the priests and Levites; and (3) that the whole of the flesh of these sacrificial animals was to be consumed upon the altar. But these three assumptions are all erroneous. There is nothing in the account about their being "for the king alone." For it is obvious that the words "and Solomon offered a sacrifice" are not to be understood as signifying that the king had these sacrifices offered for himself alone, but that the words refer to the sacrifices offered by the king and all Israel for the consecration of the temple, from the simple fact that in ver. 62 "Solomon and all Israel" are expressly mentioned as offering sacrifice, and that after the statement of the number of the sacrifices we find these words in ver. 63: "so the king and all the children of Israel dedicated the house of *Jehovah.*" Moreover it is very evident from the law in Lev. i. and iii. that at the offering of sacrifice the slaughtering, flaying, and preparation of the sacrificial animals were performed by any Israelite, and that it was only the sprinkling of the blood against the altar and the burning of the sacrificial portions upon the altar which were the exclusive province of the priests. In order to form a correct idea of the enormous number of sacrifices which could be slaughtered on any one day, we will refer again to the notice in Josephus (*Bell. Jud.* vi. 9, 3) already mentioned in the *Comm. on the Pentateuch*, vol. iii. p. 51 (translation), that in the reign of the emperor Nero the procurator *Cestius* directed the priests to count the number of the paschal lambs, and that they counted 250,000, which were slaughtered for the passover between the ninth and eleventh hours of the day, and of which the blood was sprinkled upon the altar. If then it was possible at that time to slaughter more than 250,000 lambs in three hours of the afternoon, and to sprinkle the blood upon the altar, there can have been no difficulty in slaughtering and sacrificing 3000 oxen and 18,000 sheep at the dedication of the temple on each of the seven days of the festival. As all Israel from Hamath to the brook of Egypt came to Jerusalem to this festival, we shall not be above the mark if we estimate the number of the heads of houses present at 100,000. And with very little trouble they could have slaughtered 3000 oxen and 18,000 sheep a day and prepared them for sacrificing. How many priests took an active part in this, we do not indeed know, in fact we have no information as to the number of the priests in Solomon's time; but we know that in the time of David the number of Levites qualified for service, reckoning from their thirtieth year, was 38,000, so that we may certainly assume that there were two or three thousand priests. Now if only the half of these Levites and priests had come to Jerusalem to the dedication of the temple, they alone could have slaughtered 3000 oxen and 18,000 sheep every day. And would not a thousand priests have been sufficient to sprinkle the blood of so many animals upon the altar and to burn the fat between the morning and evening sacrifice? If we divided these sacrifices among a thousand priests, each one would only have had to attend to the sprinkling of the blood and burning of the fat of three oxen and eighteen sheep each day.—But the brazen altar of burnt-offering might not have been large enough for the burning of so many sacrifices, notwithstanding the fact that only the fat portions of the thank-offerings were consumed, and they did not require much room; since the morning and evening burnt-offerings were added daily, and as festal offerings they would certainly not consist of a lamb only, but at least of one bullock, and they were burned whole, although the altar of burnt-offering with a surface of 144 square yards (see my *bibl. Archäol.* i. p. 127) would hold a very large quantity of sacrificial flesh at once. In ver. 64, however, it is expressly stated that Solomon sanctified the middle of the court, which was before the house of Jehovah, to burn the burnt-offering and meat-offering and the fat portions of the thank-offerings there, because the brazen altar was too small to hold these sacrifices. "The middle of the court" (תּוֹךְ הֶחָצֵר) is the whole of the inner portion of the court of the priests, which was in front of the temple-house and formed the centre of the court surrounding the temple. Of course we have not to imagine that the sacrifices were offered upon the stone pavement of the court, but must assume that there were auxiliary altars erected in the inner court around the brazen altar. By the burnt-offering and the meat-offering (belonging to it: אֶת־הָעֹלָה וְאֶת־הַמִּנְחָה) we are not to understand certain burnt-offerings, which were offered for a definite number of thank-offerings, as Thenius supposes. The singular and the definite article are both at variance with this. The reference is rather to the (well-known) daily morning and evening burnt-offerings with their meat-offering, and in this case, no doubt, to such a festal sacrifice as is prescribed in Num. xxviii. for the great yearly feasts.—Ver. 65. Thus Solomon held the feast at that time, and all Israel with him, a great assembly from the neighbourhood of Hamath to the brook of Egypt, *i.e.* from the whole land in its fullest extent from north to south. "The district of *Hamath*," *i.e. Epiphania* on the Orontes, is mentioned as the northern boundary (cf. Num. xxxiv. 8, xiii. 21, Josh. xiii. 5, etc.); and "the brook of Egypt" (נַחַל מִצְרַיִם), *Rhinocorura*, as the southern boundary (cf. Num. xxxiv. 8, Josh. xv. 4). "The feast" (הֶחָג), which Solomon held with the people "seven days and seven days, fourteen days," is not the feast of the dedication, but, as in ver. 2, the feast of tabernacles, which fell in the seventh month; and the meaning of the verse is, that on that occasion the feast of the seventh month was kept for fourteen days, namely, seven days as the feast of the dedication, and seven days as the feast of tabernacles. We are obliged to take the words in this way, partly on account of the evident reference to בֶּחָג (at the feast) in ver. 2 in the expression אֶת־הֶחָג (the feast) in this verse, and partly on account of the statement which follows in ver. 66, "and on the eighth day he sent the people away." The "eighth day" is not the first day of the feast of tabernacles (Thenius); but the eighth day, as the conclusion of the feast of tabernacles, עֲצֶרֶת (Lev. xxiii. 36). The correctness of this view is placed beyond all doubt by the context in the Chronicles, which states more clearly that "Solomon kept the feast seven days, and all Israel with him . . . and they kept עֲצֶרֶת (the closing feast) on the eighth day; for they kept the dedication of the altar seven days and the feast seven days; and on the twenty-third day of the seventh month he sent the people away." The feast of tabernacles lasted seven days, from the 15th to the 21st, with a closing festival on the eighth day, *i.e.* the 22d of the month (Lev. xxiii. 33–39). This festival was preceded by the dedication of the temple from the 8th to the 14th of the month. The statement in ver. 66, "on the eighth day he sent the people away," if we take the words in their strict sense, is at variance with the statement in the Chronicles, "on the 23d day," since the eighth day of the feast of tabernacles was the 22d day of the month; but it may easily be accounted for from want of precision in a well-known matter. Solomon sent the people away on the eighth day, *i.e.* on the afternoon or evening of the *atzereth* of the feast of tabernacles, so that on the morning of the next day, *i.e.* on the 23d of the month, the people took their journey home, "joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the Lord had shown to His servant David and to the people." *David* is mentioned, because the completion of the building of the temple was the fulfilment of the divine promise given to him. "Tents," for houses, as in 2 Sam. xx. 1; Judg. vii. 8, and other passages.

CHAP. IX. THE ANSWER TO SOLOMON'S PRAYER. THE MEANS EMPLOYED FOR THE ERECTION OF HIS BUILDINGS.

Vers. 1–9. The Answer of the Lord to Solomon's Dedicatory Prayer (cf. 2 Chron. vii. 11–22).—Vers. 1, 2. When Solomon had finished the building of the temple, and of his palace, and of all that he had a desire to build, the Lord appeared to him the second time, as He had appeared to him at Gibeon, *i.e.* by night in a dream (see ch. iii. 5), to promise him that his prayer should be answered. For the point of time, see at ch. viii. 1. כָּל־חֵשֶׁק, all Solomon's desire or pleasure, is paraphrased thus in the Chronicles: כָּל־הַבָּא עַל לֵב, "all that came into his mind," and, in accordance with the context, is very properly restricted to these two principal buildings by the clause, "in the house of Jehovah and in his own house."—Vers. 3 sqq. The divine promise to Solomon, that his prayer should be answered, is closely connected with the substance of the prayer; but in our account we have only a brief summary, whereas in the Chronicles it is given more elaborately (*vid.* 2 Chron. vii. 12–16). "I have sanctified this house which thou hast built, to put my name there." For the expression, see Deut. xii. 11. The sanctifying consisted in the fact, that Jehovah put His name in the temple; *i.e.* that by filling the temple with the cloud which visibly displayed His presence, He consecrated it as the scene of the manifestation of His grace. To Solomon's prayer, "May Thine eyes stand open over this house" (ch. viii. 29), the Lord replies, giving always more than we ask, "My eyes and my heart shall be there perpetually."—Vers. 4 and 5 contain the special answer to ch. viii. 25 and 26.—Vers. 6–9 refer to the prayer for the turning away of the curse, to which the Lord replies: If ye and your children turn away from me, and do not keep my commandments, but worship other gods, this house will not protect you from the curses threatened in the law, but they will be fulfilled in all their terrible force upon you and upon this temple. This threat follows the Pentateuch exactly in the words in which it is expressed; ver. 7 being founded upon Deut. xxviii. 37, 45, and 63, and the curse pronounced upon Israel in Deut. xxix. 23–26 being transferred to the temple in vers. 8 and 9.—שִׁלַּח מֵעַל פָּנַי, to dismiss, *i.e.* to reject from before my face. "This house will be עֶלְיוֹן," *i.e.* will stand high, or through its rejection will be a lofty example for all that pass by. The temple stood upon a high mountain, so that its ruins could not fail to attract the attention of all who went past. The expression עֶלְיוֹן is selected with an implied allusion to Deut. xxvi. 19 and xxviii. 1. God there promises to make Israel עֶלְיוֹן, high, exalted above all nations. This blessing will be turned into a curse. The temple, which was high and widely renowned, shall continue to be high, but in the opposite sense, as an example of the rejection of Israel from the presence of God.[1]

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[1] The conjecture of Böttcher, Thenius, and Bertheau, that עֶלְיוֹן should be altered into עִיִּים, has no support in Mic. iii. 12, Jer. xxvi. 18, and Ps. lxxix. 1,

Vers. 10–28. THE MEANS BY WHICH THE BUILDINGS WERE ERECTED.—In order that all which still remained to be said concerning Solomon's buildings might be grouped together, different notices are introduced here, namely, as to his relation to Hiram, the erection of several fortresses, and the tributary labour, and also as to his maritime expeditions; and these heterogeneous materials are so arranged as to indicate the resources which enabled Solomon to erect so many and such magnificent buildings. These resources were: (1) his connection with king Hiram, who furnished him with building materials (vers. 10–14); (2) the tributary labour which he raised in his kingdom (vers. 15–25); (3) the maritime expedition to Ophir, which brought him great wealth (vers. 26–28). But these notices are very condensed, and, as a comparison with the parallel account in 2 Chron. viii. shows, are simply incomplete extracts from a more elaborate history. In the account of the tributary labour, the enumeration of the cities finished and fortified (vers. 15–19) is interpolated; and the information concerning the support which was rendered to Solomon in the erection of his buildings by Hiram (vers. 11–14), is merely supplementary to the account already given in ch. v. Vers. 24 and 25 point still more clearly to an earlier account, since they would be otherwise unintelligible.—In 2 Chron. viii. the arrangement is a simpler one: the buildings are first of all enumerated in vers. 1–6, and the account of the tributary labour follows in vers. 7–11.

Vers. 10–14. The notices concerning *Solomon's connection with Hiram* are very imperfect; for ver. 14 does not furnish a conclusion either in form or substance. The notice in 2 Chron. viii. 1, 2 is still shorter, but it supplies an important addition to the account before us.—Vers. 10 and 11 form one

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and has all the ancient versions against it; for they all contain the Masoretic text, either in a verbal translation (LXX.), or in a paraphrase, as for example the Chaldee, "the house that was high shall be destroyed;" the Syriac and Arabic, "this house will be destroyed;" and the Vulgate, *domus hæc erit in exemplum.*—In 2 Chron. vii. 21 the thought is somewhat varied by the alteration of יִהְיֶה into אֲשֶׁר הָיָה. For it would never enter the mind of any sober critic to attribute this variation to a misinterpretation of our text. Still less can it be an unsuccessful attempt to explain or rectify our text, as Böttcher imagines, since the assertion of this critic, that עֶלְיוֹן is only used to signify an exalted position, and never the exaltation of dignity or worth, is proved to be erroneous by Deut. xxvi. 19 and xxviii. 1.

period. אָז יִתֵּן (then he gave) in ver. 11 introduces the apodosis to וַיְהִי מִק' (and it came to pass, etc.) in ver. 10; and ver. 11 contains a circumstantial clause inserted as a parenthesis. Hiram had supported Solomon according to his desire with cedar wood and cypress wood, and with gold; and Solomon gave him in return, after his buildings were completed, twenty cities in the land of *Galil.* But these cities did not please Hiram. When he went out to see them, he said, "What kind of cities are these (מָה in a contemptuous sense) which thou hast given me, my brother?" אָחִי as in ch. xx. 32, 1 Macc. x. 18, xi. 30, 2 Macc. xi. 22, as a conventional expression used by princes in their intercourse with one another. "And he called the land *Cabul* unto this day;" *i.e.* it retained this name even to later times. The land of *Galil* is a part of the country which was afterwards known as *Galilæa,* namely, the northern portion of it, as is evident from the fact that in Josh. xx. 7, xxi. 32, *Kedes* in the mountains of Naphtali, to the north-west of Lake *Huleh,* is distinguished from the Kadesh in southern Palestine by the epithet בַּגָּלִיל. It is still more evident from 2 Kings xv. 29 and Isa. viii. 23 that *Galil* embraced the northern part of the tribe of Naphtali; whilst the expression used by Isaiah, גְּלִיל הַגּוֹיִם, also shows that this district was for the most part inhabited by heathen (*i.e.* non-Israelites). The twenty cities in *Galil,* which Solomon gave to Hiram, certainly belonged therefore to the cities of the Canaanites mentioned in 2 Sam. xxiv. 7; that is to say, they were cities occupied chiefly by a heathen population, and in all probability they were in a very bad condition. Consequently they did not please Hiram, and he gave to the district the contemptuous name of the land of *Cabul.* Of the various interpretations given to the word *Cabul* (see Ges. *Thes.* p. 656), the one proposed by Hiller (*Onomast.* p. 435), and adopted by Reland, Ges., Maurer, and others, viz. that it is a contraction of כְּהַבּוּל, *sicut id quod evanuit tanquam nihil,* has the most to support it, since this is the meaning required by the context. At the same time it is possible, and even probable, that it had originally a different signification, and is derived from כָּבַל = חָבַל in the sense of to pawn, as Gesenius and Dietrich suppose. This is favoured by the occurrence of the name *Cabul* in Josh. xix. 27, where it is probably derivable from כָּבַל, to fetter, and signifies literally a fortress or castle; but in this instance it has no connection with the land of *Cabul*, since it is still preserved in the village of Cabul to the south-east of Acre (see the Comm. on Josh. *l.c.*). The "land of Cabul" would therefore mean the pawned land; and in the mouths of the people this would be twisted into "good for nothing." In this case וַיִּקְרָא would have to be taken impersonally: "they called;" and the notice respecting this name would be simply an explanation of the way in which the people interpreted it. Hiram, however, did not retain this district, but gave it back to Solomon, who then completed the cities (2 Chron. viii. 2.).[1] The only way in which we can give to ver. 14 a meaning in harmony with the context, is by taking it as a supplementary explanation of וּבַזָּהָב . . . נִשָּׂא . . . . חִירָם in ver. 11, and so rendering וַיִּשְׁלַח as a pluperfect, as in ch. vii. 13: "Hiram had sent the king a hundred and twenty talents of gold." If we reckon the value of gold as being ten times the worth of silver, a hundred and twenty talents of gold would be 3,141,600 *thalers* (about £471,240: Tr.). This is no doubt to be regarded as a loan, which Solomon obtained from Hiram to enable him to complete his buildings. Although David may have collected together the requisite amount of precious metals for the building of the temple, and Solomon had also very considerable yearly revenues, derived partly from tribute paid by subjugated nations and partly from trade, his buildings were so extensive, inasmuch as he erected a large number of cities beside the temple and his splendid palace (vers. 15–19), that his revenues might not suffice for the completion of these costly works; and therefore, since he would not apply the consecrated treasures of the temple to the erection of cities and palaces, he might find himself compelled to procure a loan from the wealthy king Hiram, which he probably intended to cover by ceding to him twenty cities on the border of the Phœnician territory. But as these cities did not please the king of Tyre and he gave them back to Solomon, the latter will no doubt have repaid the amount borrowed during the last twenty years of his reign.

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[1] This simple method of reconciling the account before us with the apparently discrepant notice in the Chronicles, concerning which even Movers (*die biblische Chronik*, p. 159) observes, that the chronicler interpolated it from a second (?) source, is so natural, that it is difficult to conceive how Bertheau can object to it; since he admits that the accounts in the books of Kings and Chronicles are incomplete extracts from common and more elaborate sources.

Vers. 15–23. *Solomon's tribute service, and the building of the cities.* (Cf. 2 Chron. viii. 3–10.) The other means by which Solomon made it possible to erect so many buildings, was by compelling the remnants of the Canaanitish population that were still in the land to perform tributary labour. זֶה דְבַר הַמַּס, "this is the case with regard to the tribute." For הֶעֱלָה מַס, compare ch. v. 27. To the announcement of the object which Solomon had in view in raising tributary labourers, namely, to build, etc., there is immediately appended a list of all the buildings completed by him (vers. 15–19); and it is not till ver. 20 that we have more precise details concerning the tribute itself. Millo, the wall of Jerusalem, and the cities enumerated, are for the most part not new buildings, but simply fortifications, or the completion of buildings already in existence. David had already built the castle of *Millo* and the wall of Jerusalem (2 Sam. v. 9); so that Solomon's building was in both cases merely fortifying more strongly. On *Millo* see the fuller remarks at 2 Sam. v. 9; and on the building of the wall, those at ch. iii. 1 and xi. 27. As Solomon thereby closed the breach of the city of David according to ch. xi. 27, he probably extended the city wall so as to enclose the temple mountain; and he may possibly have also surrounded the lower city with a wall, since David had only built a fortification round about the upper city upon Zion (see at 2 Sam. v. 9).—*Hazor:* an old royal city of the Canaanites above Lake *Huleh*, which has not yet been discovered (see at Josh. xi. 1). *Megiddo; i.e. Lejun* (see at ch. iv. 12). *Gezer:* also an old Canaanitish royal city, which stood close to the Philistian frontier, probably on the site of the present village of *el Kubab* (see at Josh. x. 33).—Ver. 16. This city had been taken and burned down by the king of Egypt; its Canaanitish inhabitants had been put to death; and the city itself had been given as a marriage portion to his daughter who was married to Solomon. Nothing is known concerning the occasion and object of Pharaoh's warlike expedition against this city. The conjecture of Thenius, that the Canaanitish inhabitants of Gezer had drawn upon themselves the vengeance of Pharaoh, mentioned here, through a piratical raid upon the Egyptian coast, is open to this objection, that according to all accounts concerning its situation, Gezer was not situated near the sea-coast, but very far inland.—Ver. 17. This city Solomon built: *i.e.* he not only rebuilt it, but also fortified it. He did the same also to *Lower*

Bethhoron, i.e. Beit-Ur Tachta, on the western slope of the mountains, four hours' journey from Gibeon. According to 2 Chron. viii. 5, Solomon also fortified *Upper Bethhoron,* which was separated by a deep wady from Lower Bethhoron, that lay to the west (see Comm. on Josh. x. 10 and xvi. 3). The two Bethhorons and Gezer were very important places for the protection of the mountainous country of Benjamin, Ephraim, and Judah against hostile invasions from the Philistian plain. The situation of Megiddo on the southern edge of the plain of Jezreel, through which the high road from the western coast to the Jordan ran, was equally important; and so also was Hazor as a border fortress against Syria in the northern part of the land.—Ver. 18. Solomon also built, *i.e.* fortified, *Baalath* and *Tadmor* in the desert. According to Josh. xix. 44, *Baalath* was a city of Dan, and therefore, as Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 6, 1) justly observes, was not far from Gezer; and consequently is not to be identified with either Baalgad or Baalbek in Coelesyria (Iken, Mich. Rosenm.; cf. Robinson, *Bibl. Res.* p. 519). תמר (*Chethîb*) is either to be read תָּמָר, or according to Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 344) תַּמּוֹר, palm; a palm-city. The *Keri* requires תַּדְמֹר (Tadmor, after 2 Chron. viii. 4), a pronunciation which may possibly have simply arisen from Aramæan expansion, but which is still the name for the city current among the Arabs even in the present day (تَدْمُر, *locus palmarum ferax*). The Greeks and Romans called it *Palmyra.* It was situated in what is certainly now a very desolate oasis of the Syrian desert, on the caravan road between Damascus and the Euphrates,—according to modern accounts, not more than seventeen hours' journey from that river; and there are still magnificent ruins which attest the former glory of this wealthy and, under queen Zenobia, very powerful city (cf. Ritter, *Erdk.* xvii. 2, p. 1486 sqq., and E. Osiander in Herzog's *Cycl.*). The correctness of this explanation of the name is placed beyond all doubt by the [illegible] in the wilderness;" and consequently even Movers has [illegible] up his former opinion, viz. that it was the city of *Thamar* in southern Judah (Ezek. xlvii. 19, xlviii. 28), which Thenius has since adopted, and has decided in favour of Palmyra, without being led astray by the attempt of Hitzig to explain the name from the Sanscrit (*vid. Deutsche morgld. Ztschr.* viii. p. 222 sqq.). The expression בָּאָרֶץ appears superfluous, as all the cities named before were situated in the land or kingdom of Solomon, and *Tadmor* is sufficiently defined by בַּמִּדְבָּר (in the desert). The text is evidently faulty, and either the name of the land, namely *Hamath* (according to 2 Chron. viii. 4), has dropped out, or בָּאָרֶץ is to be taken in connection with what follows (according to the Cod. Al. of the LXX.), and the cop. ו before אֵת כָּל־עָרֵי must be erased and inserted before בָּאָרֶץ ("and in the land of all the magazine-cities").—Ver. 19. The "magazine-cities" (עָרֵי הַמִּסְכְּנוֹת) were fortified cities, in which the produce of the land was collected, partly for provisioning the army, and partly for the support of the rural population in times of distress (2 Chron. xvii. 12, xxxii. 28), similar to those which Pharaoh had built in the land of Goshen (Ex. i. 11). If they were situated on the great commercial roads, they may also have served for storing provisions for the necessities of travellers and their beasts of burden. The cities for the war-chariots (הָרֶכֶב) and cavalry (הַפָּרָשִׁים) were probably in part identical with the magazine-cities, and situated in different parts of the kingdom. There were no doubt some of these upon Lebanon, as we may on the one hand infer from the general importance of the northern frontier to the security of the whole kingdom, and still more from the fact that Solomon had an opponent at Damascus in the person of Rezin (ch. xi. 24), who could easily stir up rebellion in the northern provinces, which had only just been incorporated by David into the kingdom; and as we may on the other hand clearly gather from 2 Chron. xvi. 4, according to which there were magazine-cities in the land of Naphtali. Finally, the words "and what Solomon had a desire to build" embrace all the rest of his buildings, which it would have occupied too much space to enumerate singly. That the words אֵת חֵשֶׁק are not to be so pressed as to be made to denote simply "the buildings undertaken for pure pleasure," like the works mentioned in Eccles. ii. 4 sqq., as Thenius and Bertheau suppose, is evident from a comparison of ver. 1, where all Solomon's buildings except the temple and palace, and therefore the fortifications as well as others, are included in the expression "all his desire."—Fuller particulars concerning the tributary workmen are given in ver. 20 sqq. The Canaanitish population that was left in the land were made use of for this purpose,—namely, the descendants of the Canaanites who had not been entirely exterminated by the Israelites. "Their children," etc., supplies a more precise definition of the expression "all the people," etc., in ver. 20. (For the fact itself, see the commentary on ch. v. 27, 28.)—Ver. 22. Solomon did not make Israelites into tributary slaves; but they were warriors, ministers, and civil and military officers. עֲבָדִים are the king's servants; שָׂרִים, the heads of the military and civil service; שָׁלִשִׁים, royal adjutants (see at 2 Sam. xxiii. 8); שָׂרֵי רִכְבּוֹ וּפָרָשָׁיו, captains over the royal war-chariots and cavalry.—For ver. 23 compare ch. v. 30.

Vers. 24 and 25 contain two notices, with which the account of Solomon's buildings is brought to a close. Both verses point back to ch. iii. 1–4 (viz. ver. 24 to ch. iii. 1, and ver. 25 to ch. iii. 2–4), and show how the incongruities which existed at the commencement of Solomon's reign were removed by his buildings. When Solomon married Pharaoh's daughter, he brought her into the city of David (ch. iii. 1), until he should have finished his palace and built her a house of her own within it. After this building was completed, he had her brought up from the city of David into it. עָלְתָה, came up, inasmuch as the palace stood upon the loftier summit of Zion. אַךְ is to be connected with אָז which follows, in the sense of *only* or *just as:* as soon as Pharaoh's daughter had gone up into the house built for her, Solomon built Millo.[1]—Ver. 25. After the building of the temple, the practice of sacrificing upon the altars of the high places could be brought to an end (ch. iii. 2). Solomon now offered burnt-offerings and thank-offerings three times a year upon the altar which he had built to the Lord, *i.e.* upon the altar of burnt-offering in the temple, or as 2 Chron. viii. 12 adds by way of explanation, "before the porch." "Three times in the year:" *i.e.* at the three great yearly feasts—passover, the feast of weeks, and the feast of tabernacles

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[1] Nothing certain can be gathered from this notice as to the situation of this castle. The remark made by Thenius, to the effect that it must have joined that portion of the palace in which the harem was, rests upon the assumption that Millo was evidently intended to shelter the harem,—an assumption which cannot be raised into a probability, to say nothing of a certainty. The building of Millo immediately after the entrance of Pharaoh's daughter into the house erected for her, may have arisen from the fact that David (? Solomon—TR.) could not undertake the fortification of Jerusalem by means of this castle till after his own palace was finished, because he had not the requisite labour at command for carrying on all these buildings at the same time.

(2 Chron. viii. 13). The words which follow, וְהַקְטֵיר אִתּוֹ, "and indeed burning (the sacrifice) at the (altar) which was before Jehovah," cannot be taken as parallel to the preceding clause, and understood as referring to the incense, which was offered along with the bleeding sacrifices, because הַקְטֵיר is not a preterite, but an inf. absol., which shows that this clause merely serves as an explanation of the preceding one, in the sense of, "namely, burning the sacrifices at the altar which was before Jehovah." הִקְטִיר is the technical expression here for the burning of the portions of the sacrificial flesh upon the altar, as in Ex. xxix. 18, Lev. i. 9, etc. On the use of אֲשֶׁר after אִתּוֹ, which Thenius and Böttcher could not understand, and on which they built up all kinds of conjectures, see Ewald, § 333, *a*, note.—וְשִׁלַּם אֶת־הַבָּיִת, "and made the house complete," *i.e.* he put the temple into a state of completion, by offering the yearly sacrifices there from that time forward, or, as Böttcher explains it, gave it thereby its full worth as a house of God and place of worship. וְשִׁלַּם is to be taken grammatically as a continuation of the inf. abs. הַקְטֵיר.

Vers. 26–28. *He sends ships to Ophir.*—Solomon built a fleet (אֳנִי is collective, ships or fleet; the *nom. unitatis* is אֳנִיָּה) at Eziongeber, near Eloth, on the coast of the Red Sea (יַם־סוּף: see at Ex. x. 19), in the land of Edom; and Hiram sent in the fleet "shipmen that had knowledge of the sea" along with Solomon's servants to Ophir, whence they brought to king Solomon 420 talents of gold. *Eziongeber*, a harbour at the north-eastern end of the Elanitic Gulf, was probably the "large and beautiful town of *Asziun*" mentioned by Makrizi (see at Num. xxxiii. 35), and situated on the great bay of *Wady Emrag* (see Rüppell, *Reisen in Nubien*, pp. 252–3). *Eloth* (lit. trees, a grove, probably so named from the large palm-grove in the neighbourhood), or *Elath* (Deut. ii. 8; 2 Kings xiv. 22: see at Gen. xiv. 6), the *Aila* and *Ælana* of the Greeks and Romans, Arab. *Aileh*, was situated at the northern point of the (Elanitic) gulf, which took its name from the town; and in the time of the Fathers it was an important commercial town. It was not far from the small modern fortress of *Akaba*, where heaps of rubbish still show the spot on which it formerly stood (compare Rüppell, *Nub.* p. 248, with plates 6 and 7, and Robinson, *Pal.* i. p. 251 sqq.).—The corresponding text, 2 Chron. viii. 17, 18, differs in many respects from the account before us. The statement in the Chronicles, that Solomon went to Eziongeber and Elath, is but a very unimportant deviation; for the building of the fleet makes it a very probable thing in itself that Solomon should have visited on that account the two towns on the Elanitic Gulf, which were very near to one another, to make the requisite arrangements upon the spot for this important undertaking. There is apparently a far greater deviation in ver. 27, where, in the place of the statement that Hiram sent בָּאֳנִי, in the (or a) fleet, his servants as sailors who had knowledge of the sea, the chronicler affirms that Hiram sent by his servants ships and men who had knowledge of the sea. For the only way in which Hiram could send ships to Eziongeber was either by land or (as Ritter, *Erdk.* xiv. p. 365, supposes) out of the Persian Gulf, supposing that the Tyrians had a fleet upon that sea at so early a date as this. The statement in the Chronicles receives an apparent confirmation from 1 Kings x. 22, "The king had a Tarshish fleet upon the sea with the fleet of Hiram," if indeed this passage also refers to the trade with Ophir, as is generally supposed; for then these words affirm that Hiram sent ships of his own to Ophir along with those of Solomon. We do not think it probable, however, that the words "Hiram sent ships by his own men" are to be so pressed as to be taken to mean that he had whole ships, or ships taken to pieces, conveyed to Eziongeber either from Tyre or out of the Mediterranean Sea, although many cases might be cited from antiquity in support of this view.[1] In all probability the words affirm nothing more than that Hiram supplied the ships for this voyage, that is to say, that he had them built at Eziongeber by his own men, and the requisite materials conveyed thither, so far as they were not to be obtained upon the spot. At any rate, Solomon was obliged to call the Tyrians to his help for the building of the ships, since the Israelites, who had hitherto carried on no maritime trade at all, were altogether inexperienced in shipbuilding. Moreover, the country round Ezion-geber would hardly furnish wood adapted for the purpose, as there are only palms to be found there, whose spongy wood, however useful it may be for the inside of houses, cannot be applied to the building of ships. But if Hiram had ships built for Solomon by his own men and sent him sailors who were accustomed to the sea, he would certainly have some of his own ships engaged in this maritime trade; and this explains the statement in ch. x. 22.

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[1] Thus, for example, according to Arriani *exped. Alex.* I. v. p. 329, and vii. p. 485 (ed. Blanc), Alexander the Great had ships transported from Phœnicia to the Euphrates, and out of the Indus into the Hydaspes, the ships being taken to pieces for the land transport (ἐτμήθησαν), and the pieces (τμήματα) afterwards joined together again. Plutarch relates (*vita Anton.* p. 948, ed. Frkf. 1620) that Cleopatra would have had her whole fleet carried across the isthmus which separates Egypt from the Red Sea, and have escaped by that means, had not the Arabs prevented the execution of her plan by burning the first ships that were drawn up on the land. According to Thucydides, *bell. Pelop.* iv. 8, the Peloponnesians conveyed sixty ships which lay at Corcyra across the Leucadian isthmus. Compare also Polyæni *strateg.* v. 2, 6, and Ammian. Marcell. xxiv. 7, and from the middle ages the account of Makrizi in Burckhardt's *Reisen in Syrien*, p. 331.

The destination of the fleet was *Ophir*, whence the ships brought 420 or (according to the Chronicles) 450 talents of gold. The difference between 420 and 450 may be accounted for from the substitution of the numeral letter נ (50) for כ (20). The sum mentioned amounted to eleven or twelve million dollars (from £1,600,000 to £1,800,000—Tr.), and the question arises, whether this is to be taken as the result of one voyage, or as the entire profits resulting from the expeditions to Ophir. The words admit of either interpretation, although they are more favourable to the latter than to the former, inasmuch as there is no allusion whatever to the fact that they brought this amount all at once or on every voyage. (See also at ch. x. 14 and 22.) The question as to the situation of Ophir has given rise to great dispute, and hitherto no certain conclusion has been arrived at; in fact, it is possible that there are no longer any means of deciding it. Some have endeavoured to prove that it was in southern Arabia, others that it was on the eastern coast of Africa, and others again that it was in Hither India.[1] The decision is dependent upon a previous question, whether ch. x. 22, "The king had a Tarshish fleet upon the sea with the fleet of Hiram; once in three years came the Tarshish fleet, bringing gold, silver," etc., also applies to the voyage to Ophir. The expression "Tarshish fleet;" the word בַּיָּם ("on the sea"), which naturally suggests that sea to which the Israelites applied the special epithet הַיָּם, namely the Mediterranean; and lastly, the difference in the cargoes,—the ships from Ophir bringing gold and *algummim* wood (ver. 28 and ch. x. 11), and the Tarshish fleet bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks (ch. x. 22),—appear to favour the conclusion that the Tarshish fleet did not sail to Ophir, but upon the Mediterranean Sea to Tarshish, *i.e.* Tartessus in Spain; to which we may add the fact that אֳנִי תַרְשִׁישׁ is reproduced in 2 Chron. ix. 21 by אֳנִיּוֹת הֹלְכוֹת תַּרְשִׁישׁ, "ships going to Tarshish." Nevertheless, however plausible these arguments may appear, after a renewed investigation of the subject I cannot regard them as having decisive weight: for (1) the expression "Tarshish fleet" is used in ch. xxii. 49 in connection with ships that were intended to go to Ophir; (2) בַּיָּם (upon the sea) might receive its more precise definition from what precedes; and (3) the difference in the cargoes reduces itself to this, that in addition to the gold, which was the chief production of Ophir, there are a few other articles of trade mentioned, so that the account in ch. x. 22 is more complete than that in ch. ix. 28 and x. 11. The statement concerning the Tarshish fleet in ch. x. 22 contains a passing remark, like that in ch. x. 11, from which we must infer that both passages treat in the same manner simply of the voyage to Ophir, and therefore that the term "Tarshish ships," like our Indiamen (*Indienfahrer*), was applied to ships intended for long voyages. If, in addition to the ships sailing to Ophir, Solomon had also had a fleet upon the Mediterranean Sea which sailed with the Phœnicians to Tartessus, this would certainly have been mentioned here (ch. ix. 27, 28) at the same time as the Ophir voyage. On all

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[1] Compare the thorough examination of the different views concerning Ophir in C. Ritter's *Erdk.* xiv. pp. 348–431, with the briefer collection made by Gesenius in his *Thes.* p. 141 sq. and in the *Allgem. Encyclop. der Wissenschaft u. Künste*, 3 Sect. Bd. 4, p. 201 sqq., and by Pressel, art. "Ophir," in Herzog's *Cyclopædia*.—We need not dwell upon the different opinions held by the earlier writers. But among modern authors, Niebuhr, Gesenius, Rosenmüller, and Seetzen decide in favour of Arabia; Quatremère (*Mémoire sur le pays d'Ophir* in *Mém. de l'Instit. roy.* 1845, t. xv. P. ii. p. 350 sqq.) and Movers, who takes Ophir to be the name of an emporium on the eastern coast of Africa, in favour of Sofala; while Chr. Lassen (*Indische Alterthumskunde*,

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i. p. 537 sqq., ii. p. 552 sqq.) and C. Ritter are the principal supporters of India. On the other hand, Albr. Roscher (*Ptolemäus und die Handelsstrassen in Central-Africa*, Gotha 1857, p. 57 sqq.) has attempted to connect together all these views by assuming that the seamen of Hiram and Solomon fetched the gold of Western Africa from the island of Dahlak in the Red Sea, and having taken it to India to exchange, returned at the end of a three years' voyage enriched with gold and the productions of India.

these grounds we can come to no other conclusion than that the expression in 2 Chron. ix. 21, "ships going to Tarshish," is simply a mistaken exposition of the term "Tarshish fleet,"—a mistake which may easily be explained from the fact, that at the time when the Chronicles were written, the voyages not only of the Israelites but also of the Tyrians both to Ophir and Tarshish had long since ceased, and even the geographical situation of these places was then unknown to the Jews (see my *Introduction to the Old Test.* p. 442, ed. 2).

The name *Ophir* occurs first of all in Gen. x. 29 among the tribes of Southern Arabia, that were descended from Joktan, between Seba and Havilah, *i.e.* the Sabæans and Chaulotæans. Hence it appears most natural to look for the gold-land of Ophir in Southern Arabia. But as there is still a possibility that the Joktanide tribe of Ophir, or one branch of it, may subsequently have emigrated either to the eastern coast of Africa or even to Hither India, and therefore that the Solomonian Ophir may have been an Arabian colony outside Arabia, the situation of this gold country cannot be determined without further evidence from Gen. x. 29 alone; but before arriving at an actual decision, we must first of all examine the arguments that may be adduced in support of each of the three countries named. *Sofala* in Eastern Africa, in the Mozambique Channel, has nothing in common with the name *Ophir*, but is the Arabic سَفَالَة (Heb. שְׁפֵלָה), *i.e.* lowland or sea-coast; and the old Portuguese accounts of the gold mines in the district of *Fura* there, as well as the pretended walls of the queen of Saba, have far too little evidence to support them, to have any bearing upon the question before us. The supposed connection between the name *Ophir* and the city of *Σουπάρα* mentioned by Ptolemæus, or *Οὔππαρα* by Periplus (*Geogr. min.* i. p. 30), in the neighbourhood of *Goa*, or the shepherd tribe of *Abhira*, cannot be sustained. *Σουπάρα* or *Sufâra* (Edrisi) answers to the Sanscrit *Supāra*, *i.e.* beautiful coast (cf. Lassen, *Ind. Alterthk.* i. p. 107); and *Οὔππαρα* in Periplus is no doubt simply a false reading for *Σουπάρα*, which has nothing in common with אוֹפִיר. And the shepherd tribe of *Abhira* can hardly come into consideration, because the country which they inhabited, to the south-east of the mouths of the Indus, has no gold.—Again, the hypothesis that India is intended derives just as little support from the circumstance that, with the exception of Gen. x. 29, the LXX. have always rendered אוֹפִיר either Σωφιρά or Σουφίρ, which is, according to the Coptic lexicographers, the name used by the Copts for India, and that Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 6, 4), who used the Old Test. in the Alexandrian version, has given India as the explanation of Ophir, as it does from this supposed resemblance in the names. For, according to the geographical ideas of the Alexandrians and later Greeks, India reached to Ethiopia, and Ethiopia to India, as Letronne has conclusively proved (see his *Mémoire sur une mission arienne*, etc., in *Mém. de l'Instit., Acad. des Inscript. et Bell. Lettres*, t. x. p. 220 sqq.).

Greater stress has been laid upon the duration of the voyages to Ophir,—namely, that the Tarshish fleet came once in three years, according to ch. x. 22, and brought gold, etc. But even Lassen, who follows Heeren, observes quite truly, that " this expression need not be understood as signifying that three whole years intervened between the departure and return, but simply that the fleet returned once in the course of three years." Moreover, the stay in Ophir is to be reckoned in as part of the time occupied in the voyage; and that this is not to be estimated as a short one, is evident from the fact that, according to Homer, *Odyss.* xv. 454 sqq., a Phœnician merchantman lay for a whole year at one of the Cyclades before he had disposed of his wares of every description, in return for other articles of commerce, and filled his roomy vessel. If we add to this the slowness of the voyage,—considering that just as at the present day the Arabian coasters go but very slowly from port to port, so the combined fleet of Hiram and Solomon would not be able to proceed with any greater rapidity, inasmuch as the Tyrians were not better acquainted with the dangerous Arabian Sea than the modern Arabians are, and that the necessary provisions for a long voyage, especially the water for drinking, could not be taken on board all at once, but would have to be taken in at the different landing-places, and that on these occasions some trade would be done,—we can easily understand how a voyage from Eziongeber to the strait of Bab el Mandeb and the return might occupy more than a year,[1] so that the time occupied in the voyage as given here cannot furnish any decisive proof that the fleet sailed beyond Southern Arabia to the East Indies.

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[1] It is no proof to the contrary, that, according to the testimony of ancient writers, as collected by Movers (*Phöniz.* ii. 3, p. 190 sqq.), the Phœnicians sailed almost as rapidly as the modern merchant ships; for this evidence simply applies to the voyages on the Mediterranean Sea with which they were

And lastly, the same remarks apply to the goods brought from Ophir, which many regard as decisive evidence in favour of India. The principal article for which Ophir became so celebrated, viz. the gold, is not found either in *Sufâra* near Goa, or in the land of *Abhira*. Even if India be much richer in gold than was formerly supposed (cf. Lassen, ii. p. 592), the rich gold country lies to the north of Cashmir (see Lassen, ii. pp. 603–4). Moreover, not only is it impossible to conceive what goods the Phœnicians can have offered to the Indian merchants for their gold and the other articles named, since large sums of gold were sent to India every year in the Roman times to pay for the costly wares that were imported thence (see Roscher, pp. 53, 54); but it is still less possible to comprehend how the shepherd tribe of Abhira could have come into possession of so much gold as the Ophir fleet brought home. The conjecture of Ritter (*Erdk.* xiv. p. 399) and Lassen (ii. p. 592), that this tribe had come to the coast not very long before from some country of their own where gold abounded, and that as an uncultivated shepherd tribe they attached but very little value to the gold, so that they parted with it to the Phœnicians for their purple cloths, their works in brass and glass, and for other things, has far too little probability to appear at all admissible. If the Abhira did not know the value of the gold, they would not have brought it in such quantities out of their original home into these new settlements. We should therefore be obliged to assume that they were a trading people, and this would be at variance with all the known accounts concerning this tribe.—As a rule, the gold treasures of Hither Asia were principally obtained from Arabia in the most ancient times. If we leave Havilah (Gen. ii. 11) out of the account, because its position cannot be determined

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familiar, and to the period when the Phœnician navigation had reached its fullest development, so that it has no bearing upon the time of Solomon and a voyage upon the Arabian Sea, with which the Phœnicians were hitherto quite unacquainted.—Again, the calculation made by Lassen (ii. pp. 590–1), according to which a voyage from Eziongeber to the mouth of the Indus could have been accomplished in a hundred days, is founded upon the assumption that the Phœnicians were already acquainted with the monsoon and knew what was the best time for the navigation of the Red Sea,—an assumption which can neither be proved nor shown to be probable.

with certainty, the only other place specially referred to in the Old Testament besides Ophir as being celebrated as a gold country is Saba, in the south-western portion of Yemen. The Sabæans bring gold, precious stones, and incense (Isa. lx. 6; Ezek. xxvii. 22); and the queen of Saba presented Solomon with 120 talents of gold, with perfumes and with precious stones (1 Kings x. 10). This agrees with the accounts of the classical writers, who describe Arabia as very rich in gold (cf. Strabo, xvi. 777 sq. and 784; Diod. Sic. ii. 50, iii. 44; also Bochart, *Phaleg*, l. ii. c. 27). These testimonies, which we have already given in part at Ex. xxxviii. 31, are far too distinct to be set aside by the remark that there is no gold to be found in Arabia at the present time. For whilst, on the one hand, the wealth of Arabia in gold may be exhausted, just as Spain no longer yields any silver, on the other hand we know far too little of the interior of Southern Arabia to be able distinctly to maintain that there is no gold in existence there.—Silver, the other metal brought from Ophir, was also found in the land of the Nabatæans, according to Strabo, xvi. p. 784, although the wealth of the ancient world in silver was chiefly derived from Tarshish or Tartessus in Spain (cf. Movers, *Phöniz.* ii. 3, p. 36 sqq., where the different places are enumerated in which silver was found).—That precious stones were to be found in Arabia is evident from the passages cited above concerning the Sabæans. —On the other hand, however, it has been supposed that the remaining articles of Ophir could only have been brought from the East Indies.

According to ch. x. 12, the Ophir ships brought a large quantity of עֲצֵי אַלְמֻגִּים (almuggim wood: 2 Chron. ii. 7, אַלְגּוּמִּים). According to Kimchi (on 2 Chron. ii. 7), the אַלְמֹג or אַלְגֻּם is *arbor rubri coloris, dicta lingua arabica albakam* (البقم), *vulgo brasilica.* This tree, according to Abulfadl (Celsius, *Hicrob.* i. p. 176), is a native of India and Ethiopia; and it is still a question in dispute, whether we are to understand by this the *Pterocarpus Santal.*, from which the true sandal-wood comes, and which is said to grow only in the East Indies on Malabar and Java, or the *Cæsalpinia Sappan L.*, a tree which grows in the East Indies, more especially in Ceylon, and also in different parts of Africa, the red wood of which is used in Europe chiefly for dyeing. Moreover the true explanation of the Hebrew name is still undiscovered. The derivation of it from the Sanscrit *Valgu, i.e. pulcher* (Lassen and Ritter), has been set aside by Gesenius as inappropriate, and *mocha, mochâta,* which is said to signify sandal-wood in Sanscrit, has been suggested instead. But no evidence has been adduced in its favour, nor is the word to be found in Wilson's *Śanscrit Lexicon.* If, however, this derivation were correct, אל would be the Arabic article, and the introduction of this article in connection with the word *mocha* would be a proof that the sandal-wood, together with its name, came to the Hebrews through merchants who spoke Arabic.—The other articles from Ophir mentioned in ch. x. 22 are שֶׁנְהַבִּים, *ὀδόντες ἐλεφάντινοι* (LXX.), *dentes elephantorum* or *ebur* (Vulg.), שֵׁן דְּפִיל, elephants' teeth (Targ.). But however certain the meaning of the word may thus appear, the justification of this meaning is quite as uncertain. In other cases ivory is designated by the simple term שֵׁן (ch. x. 18, xxii. 39; Ps. xlv. 9; Amos iii. 15, etc.), whereas Ezekiel (xxvii. 15) calls the whole tusk קַרְנוֹת שֵׁן, horns of the tooth. הַבִּים is said to signify elephants here; and according to Benary it is contracted from הָאִבִּים, the Sanscrit word *ibha,* elephant; according to Ewald, from הַלְבִּים, from the Sanscrit *Kalabha;* and according to Hitzig, from נְהָבִים = לְהָבִים, *Libyi;* or else שֶׁנְהַבִּים is a false reading for שֵׁן וְהָבְנִים, ivory and ebony, according to Ezek. xxvii. 15 (see Ges. *Thes.* p. 1453). Of these four derivations the first two are decidedly wrong: the first, because *ibha* as a name for the elephant only occurs, according to Weber, in the later Indian writings, and is never used in the earlier writings in this sense (*vid.* Roediger, *Addenda ad Ges. thes.* p. 115); the second, because *Kalabha* does not signify the elephant, but *catulum elephanti,* before it possesses any teeth available for ivory. The third is a fancy which its originator himself has since given up; and the fourth a conjecture, which is not raised to a probability even by the attempt of Böttcher to show that הַבִּים is a case of backward assimilation from הַבְנִים, because the asyndeton שֵׁן הַבִּים between two couples connected by ו is without any analogy, and the passages adduced by Böttcher, viz. Deut. xxix. 22, Josh. xv. 54 sqq., and even Ezek. xxvii. 33, are to be taken in quite a different way.—The rendering of קֹפִים by apes, and the connection of the name not only with the Sanscrit and Malabar *kapi,* but also with the Greek *κῆπος* and *κῆβος,* also *κεῖβος,* are much surer; but, on the other hand, the assumption that the Greeks, like the Semitic nations, received the word from the Indians along with the animals, is very improbable: for *κῆπος* in Greek does not denote the ape (*πίθηκος*) generally, but simply a species of long-tailed apes, the native land of which, according to the testimony of ancient writers, was Ethiopia,[1] and the Ethiopian apes are hardly likely to have sprung from India.—And lastly, even in the case of תֻּכִּיִּים, according to the ancient versions *peacocks*, the derivation from the Malabaric or Tamul *tôgai* or *tôghai* (cf. Roediger in Ges. *Thes.* p. 1502) is not placed beyond the reach of doubt.

If, in conclusion, we look through all the articles of commerce that were brought to Jerusalem from the Ophir voyages, apart from the gold and silver, which were not to be found in the land of Abhira, the ivory and ebony (supposing that we ought to read שֵׁן וְהָבְנִים for שֶׁנְהַבִּים) furnish no evidence in support of India, inasmuch as both of them could have been brought from Ethiopia, as even Lassen admits (ii. p. 554). And even if the words *Almuggim*, *Kophim*, and *Tucchijim* really came from India along with the objects to which they belonged, it would by no means follow with certainty from this alone that Ophir was situated in India.—For since, for example, there are indisputable traces of very early commercial intercourse between India and Hither Asia and Africa, especially Southern Arabia and Ethiopia, reaching far beyond the time of Solomon, the seamen of Hiram and Solomon may have obtained these articles either in Arabia or on the Ethiopian coast. For even if the statements of Herodotus and Strabo, to the effect that the Phœnicians emigrated from the islands of the Erythræan Sea, Tylos (or Tyros ?) and Arados, to the Phœnician coast, do not prove that the Phœnicians had already extended their commercial enterprise as far as India even before the twelfth century, as Lassen (ii. 597 and 584–5) supposes; if the Tyrians and Aradians, who were related to them by tribe, still continued to dwell upon the islands of the Persian Gulf, from which they could much more easily find the way to

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[1] Compare Aristoteles, *hist. animal.* ii. 8: *ἔστι δὲ ὁ μὲν κῆβος πίθηκος ἔχων οὐράν.* Strabo, xvii. p. 812: *ἔστι δὲ ὁ κῆπος τὸ μὲν πρόσωπον ἐοικὼς Σατύρῳ, τ' ἄλλα δὲ κυνὸς καὶ ἄρκτου μεταξὺ· γεννᾶται δ' ἐν Αἰθιοπίᾳ.* Plinius, *h. n.* viii. 19 (28): *Iidem* (the games of Pompey the Great) *ostenderunt ex Æthiopia quas vocant κήπους, quarum pedes posteriores pedibus humanis et cruribus, priores manibus fuere similes.* Solinus Polyh. says the same (Bochart, *Hieroz.* i. lib. iii. c. 31).

India by sea,—since the historical character of these statements has been disputed by Movers (*Phönizier*, ii. 1, p. 38 sqq.) on very weighty grounds; yet it is evident that there was a very early intercourse between East India and Africa, reaching far beyond all historical testimony, from the following well-established facts: that the Egyptians made use of indigo in the dyeing of their stuffs, and this could only have been brought to them from India; that muslins, which were likewise of Indian origin, are found among the materials in which the mummies are enveloped; and that in the graves of the kings of the eighteenth dynasty, who ceased to reign in the year 1476 B.C., there have been discovered vases of Chinese porcelain (cf. Lassen, ii. p. 596). And the intercourse between the southern coast of Arabia and Hither India may have been quite as old, if not older; so that Indian productions may have been brought to Hither Asia by the Sabæans long before the time of Solomon (*vid.* Lassen, ii. pp. 593–4, and Movers, *Phöniz.* ii. 3, pp. 247, 256). But the commercial intercourse between Arabia and the opposite coast of Ethiopia, by which African productions reached the trading inhabitants of Arabia, was unquestionably still older than the trade with India. If we weigh well all these points, there is no valid ground for looking outside Arabia for the situation of the Solomonian Ophir. But we shall no doubt be obliged to give up the hope of determining with any greater precision that particular part of the coast of Arabia in which Ophir was situated, inasmuch as hitherto neither the name Ophir nor the existence of gold-fields in Arabia has been established by modern accounts, and moreover the interior of the great Arabian peninsula is still for the most part a *terra incognita*.[1]

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[1] If the notice of Eupolemus contained in a fragment in Eusebius (*præpar. ev.* ix. 30), to the effect that *David* (a mistake for Solomon) sent miners to the island of Οὐρφῆ (for which Gesenius conjectures that we should read Οὐφρῆ or Οὐφήρ) in the Red Sea, which was rich in gold mines, and that they brought gold thence to Judæa, could be proved to be historical through any earlier testimony, Ophir would have been an island of the Erythræan Sea, either *Dahlak* inside Bab el Mandeb, or *Diu Zokatara* (the Sanscrit *Dwipa Sukhatara*, *i.e.* the happy island) by the present Cape Guardafui. But this notice is evidently simply a conjecture founded upon the Old Testament, having no historical value.

CHAP. X. THE QUEEN OF SABA. SOLOMON'S WEALTH AND SPLENDOUR.

Vers. 1–13. VISIT OF THE QUEEN OF SABA (cf. 2 Chron. ix. 1–12).—When the fame of Solomon's great wisdom came to the ears of the queen of Saba, probably through the Ophir voyages, she undertook a journey to Jerusalem, to convince herself of the truth of the report which had reached her, by putting it to the test by means of enigmas. שְׁבָא, *Σαβά*, is not Ethiopia or Meroë, as Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 6, 5), who confounds שְׁבָא with סְבָא, and the Abyssinian Christians suppose (*vid.* Ludolfi *hist. Æth.* ii. 3), but the kingdom of the *Sabæans*, who were celebrated for their trade in incense, gold, and precious stones, and who dwelt in Arabia Felix, with the capital *Saba*, or the *Μαριάβα* of the Greeks. This queen, who is called *Balkis* in the Arabian legend (cf. Koran, *Sur.* 27, and Pococke, *Specim. hist. Arab.* p. 60), heard the fame of Solomon לְשֵׁם יְהֹוָה; *i.e.* not "at the naming of the name of Jehovah" (Böttcher), nor "in respect of the glory of the Lord, with regard to that which Solomon had instituted for the glory of the Lord" (Thenius); nor even "serving to the glorification of God" (de Wette and Maurer); but literally, "belonging to the name of the Lord;" in other words, the fame which Solomon had acquired through the name of the Lord, or through the fact that the Lord had so glorified Himself in him (Ewald and Dietrich in Ges. *Lex. s.v.* לְ). "She came to try him with riddles," *i.e.* to put his wisdom to the test by carrying on a conversation with him in riddles. The love of the Arabs for riddles, and their superiority in this *jeu d'esprit*, is sufficiently well known from the immense extent to which the Arabic literature abounds in *Mashals*. We have only to think of the large collections of proverbs made by Ali ben Abi Taleb and Meidani, or the *Makamen* of Hariri, which have been made accessible to all by F. Rückert's masterly translation into German, and which are distinguished by an amazing fulness of word-play and riddles. חִידָה, a riddle, is a pointed saying which merely hints at the deeper truth and leaves it to be guessed.—Vers. 2, 3. As the queen of a wealthy country, she came with a very large retinue. חַיִל does not mean a military force or an armed escort (Thenius), but riches, property; namely, her numerous retinue of men (עֲבָדִים, ver. 13), and camels laden with valuable treasures. The words יְקָרָה . . . גְּמַלִּים are an explanatory circumstantial clause, both here and also in the Chronicles, where the cop. *Vav* stands before וּמִלִּים (cf. Ewald, § 341, *a*, *b*). "And spake to Solomon all that she had upon her heart," *i.e.* in this connection, whatever riddles she had it in her mind to lay before him; "and Solomon told her all her sayings," *i.e.* was able to solve all her riddles. There is no ground for thinking of sayings of a religious nature, as the earlier commentators supposed, but simply of sayings the meaning of which was concealed, and the understanding of which indicated very deep wisdom.—Vers. 4, 5. She saw הַבַּיִת, *i.e.* Solomon's palace, not the temple, and "the food of his table," *i.e.* both the great variety of food that was placed upon the king's table (ch. v. 2, 3), and also the costly furniture of the table (ver. 21), and "the seat of his retainers and the standing of his servants," *i.e.* the places in the palace assigned to the ministers and servants of the king, which were contrived with wisdom and arranged in a splendid manner. עֲבָדִים are the chief officers of the king, viz. ministers, counsellors, and *aides de camp*; מְשָׁרְתִים, the court servants; מוֹשָׁב, the rooms of the courtiers in attendance; מַעֲמָד, the standing-place, *i.e.* the rooms of the inferior servants, "and their clothing," which they received from the king; and מַשְׁקָיו, not his cup-bearers (LXX., Vulg.), but as in Gen. xl. 21, the drink, *i.e.* probably the whole of the drinking arrangements; וְעֹלָתוֹ, and his ascent, by which he was accustomed to go into the house of Jehovah. עֹלָה does not mean burnt-offering here, as the older translators have rendered it, but ascent, as in Ezek. xl. 26, and as the Chronicles have correctly explained it by עֲלִיָּתוֹ. For burnt-offering is not to be thought of in this connection, because the queen had nothing to see or to be astonished at in the presentation of such an offering. עֹלָתוֹ is most likely "the king's outer entrance" into the temple, mentioned in 2 Kings xvi. 18; and the passage before us would lead us to suppose that this was a work of art, or an artistic arrangement. וְלֹא הָיָה וגו׳, "and there was no more spirit in her:" she was beside herself with amazement, as in Josh. v. 1, ii. 11.—Vers. 6–9. She then said with astonishment to Solomon, that of what her eyes now saw she had not heard the half, through the report which had reached her of his affairs and of his wisdom, and which had hitherto appeared incredible to her; and not only congratulated his servants, who stood continually near him and could hear his wisdom, but also praised Jehovah his God, that out of His eternal love to His people Israel He had given them a king to do justice and righteousness. The earlier theologians inferred from this praising of Jehovah, which involved faith in the true God, when taken in connection with Matt. xii. 42, that this queen had been converted to the true God, and conversed with Solomon on religious matters. But, as we have already observed at ch. v. 21, an acknowledgment of Jehovah as the God of Israel was reconcilable with polytheism. And the fact that nothing is said about her offering sacrifice in the temple, shows that the conversion of the queen is not to be thought of here.—Ver. 10. She thereupon presented to Solomon a hundred and twenty talents of gold (more than three million thalers [nearly half a million sterling—TR.]), and a very large quantity of spices and precious stones. The בְּשָׂמִים probably included the genuine balsam of Arabia, even if בֹּשֶׂם was not the specific name of the genuine balsam. "There never more came so much of such spices to Jerusalem." Instead of לֹא בָא . . . עוֹד לָרֹב we find in the Chronicles, ver. 9, simply לֹא הָיָה, "there was nothing like this balsam," which conveys the same meaning though expressed more indefinitely, since כַּבֹּשֶׂם הַהוּא points back to the preceding words, "balsam (spices) in great quantity."[1]—Vers. 11, 12. The allusion to these costly presents leads the historian to introduce the remark here, that the Ophir fleet also brought, in addition to gold, a large quantity of *Algummim* wood (see at ch. ix. 28) and precious stones. Of this wood Solomon had מִסְעָד or מְסִלּוֹת made for the temple and palace. מִסְעָד, from סָעַד, signifies a support, and מְסִלָּה may be a later form for סֻלָּם, a flight of steps or a staircase, so that we should have to think of steps with bannisters. This explanation is at any rate a safer one than that of "divans" (Thenius), which would have been quite out of place in the temple, or "narrow pannelled stripes on the floor" (Bertheau), which cannot in the smallest degree be deduced from מִסְעָד, or "support = moveables, viz. tables, benches, footstools, boxes, and drawers" (Böttcher), which neither harmonizes with the temple, where there was no such furniture, nor with the מְסִלּוֹת of the Chronicles. "And guitars and harps for the singers," probably for the temple singers. כִּנּוֹר and נֵבֶל are string instruments; the former resembling our guitar rather than the harp, the strings being carried over the sounding-board upon a bridge, the latter being of a pitcher shape without any sounding bridge, as in the case of the harps.—Ver. 13. Solomon gave the queen of Saba all that she wished and asked for, beside what he gave her "according to the hand," *i.e.* the might, of the king; that is to say, in addition to the presents answering to his might and his wealth, which he was obliged to give as a king, according to the Oriental custom. In the Chronicles (ver. 12) we find "beside that which she had brought (הֵבִיאָה) to the king," which is an abbreviated expression for "beside that which he gave her in return for what she had brought to him," or beside the return presents corresponding to her gifts to him, as it has been already correctly paraphrased by the Targum.

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[1] It was this which gave rise to the legend in Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 6, 6), that it was through this queen that the root of the true balsam (*Opobalsamum*), which was afterwards cultivated in gardens at Jericho and Engedi, was first of all brought to Palestine (cf. Movers, *Phönizier*, ii. 3, p. 226 sqq.).

Vers. 14–22. SOLOMON'S WEALTH AND THE USE HE MADE OF IT (cf. 2 Chron. ix. 13–21).—Ver. 14. The gold which Solomon received in one year amounted to 666 talents,—more than seventeen million thalers (two million and a half sterling—TR.). 666 is evidently a round number founded upon an approximative valuation. בְּשָׁנָה אֶחָת is rendered in the Vulg. *per annos singulos;* but this is hardly correct, as the Ophir fleet, the produce of which is at any rate included, did not arrive every year, but once in three years. Thenius is wrong in supposing that this revenue merely applies to the direct taxes levied upon the Israelites. It includes all the branches of Solomon's revenue, whether derived from his commerce by sea and land (cf. vers. 28, 29) or from the royal domains (1 Chron. xxvii. 26–31), or received in the form of presents from foreign princes, who either visited him like the queen of Saba or sent ambassadors to him (vers. 23, 24), excepting the duties and tribute from conquered kings, which are specially mentioned in ver. 15. לְבַד מֵאַנְשֵׁי הת׳, beside what came in (בָּא לִשְׁלֹמֹה) from the travelling traders and the commerce of the merchants, and from all the kings, etc. אַנְשֵׁי הַתָּרִים (a combination resembling our merchantmen; cf. Ewald, § 287, *e*, p. 721) are probably the tradesmen or smaller dealers who travelled about in the country, and רֹכְלִים the wholesale dealers. This explanation of תָּרִים cannot be rendered doubtful by the objection that תּוּר only occurs elsewhere in connection with the wandering about of spies; for רָכַל signified originally to go about, spy out, or retail scandal, and after that to trade, and go about as a tradesman. מַלְכֵי הָעֶרֶב are not kings of the auxiliary and allied nations (Chald., Ges.), but kings of the mixed population, and according to Jer. xxv. 24, more especially of the population of Arabia Deserta (הַשֹּׁכְנִים בַּמִּדְבָּר), which bordered upon Palestine; for עֶרֶב is a mixed crowd of all kinds of men, who either attach themselves to a nation (Ex. xii. 38), or live in the midst of it as foreigners (Neh. xiii. 3), hence a number of mercenaries (Jer. l. 37). In 2 Chron. ix. 14, הָעֶרֶב is therefore correctly explained by the term עֲרָב, which does not mean the whole of Arabia, but "only a tract of country not very extensive on the east and south of Palestine" (Gesenius), as these tribes were tributary to Solomon. פַּחוֹת הָאָרֶץ, the governors of the land, are probably the officers named in ch. iv. 7–19. As they collected the duties in the form of natural productions and delivered them in that form, so also did the tradesmen and merchants pay their duties, and the subjugated pastoral tribes of Arabia their tribute, *in natura.* This explains in a very simple manner why these revenues are separated from the revenue of Solomon which came in the form of money. פֶּחָה is a foreign word, which first found its way into the Hebrew language after the times of the Assyrians, and sprang from the Sanscrit *paksha,* a companion or friend, which took the form of *pakkha* in Prakrit, and probably of *pakha* in the early Persian (*vid.* Benfey and Stern, *die Monatsnamen,* p. 195).—Vers. 16, 17. Solomon had 500 ornamental shields made, 200 larger ones (צִנִּים, *scuta,* targets), and 300 smaller (מָגִנִּים, *clypei*). These shields, like all the shields of the ancients, were made of wood or basket-work, and covered with gold plate instead of leather (see my *bibl. Archäol.* ii. pp. 296 sqq.). זָהָב שָׁחוּט does not mean *aurum jugulatum, i.e.* gold mixed with metal of a different kind, but, as Kimchi has shown, *aurum diductum,* beaten gold, from שָׁחַט, to stretch; since Solomon would certainly use pure gold for these ornamental shields. "Six hundred shekels of gold he spread upon one target," that is to say, he used for gilding one target. Six hundred shekels would weigh about 17½ lbs., so that the value of the gold upon a target would be more than 5000 thalers (£750), supposing that the Mosaic shekel is meant. But this is rendered doubtful by the fact that the gold upon the small shields is estimated at three minæ. If, for example, the three minæ are equal to three hundred shekels, according to 2 Chron. ix. 16, as is generally assumed, a hundred shekels are reckoned as one mina; and as the mina only contained fifty Mosaic shekels, according to Ezek.

xlv. 12, the reference must be to shekels after the king's weight (2 Sam. xiv. 26), which were only half the sacred shekel (see my *bibl. Archäol.* ii. p. 135). Consequently the gold plate upon one target was not quite 9 lbs., and that upon a shield not quite 4½ lbs. These shields were intended for the body-guard to carry on state occasions (ch. xiv. 27, 28; 2 Chron. xii. 10); and were kept in the house of the forest of Lebanon (ch. vii. 2).—Vers. 18–20. Solomon had a great throne of ivory made, and had it overlaid with fine gold. כִּסֵּא־שֵׁן is not a throne made of ivory, but one merely ornamented with ivory; and we are to imagine the gilding as effected by laying the gold simply upon the wood, and inserting the ivory within the gold plate. מוּפָז, a *hophal* participle of פָּזַז: *aurum depuratum*, hence = טָהוֹר in 2 Chron. ix. 17. The throne had six steps, and a "rounded head on the hinder part thereof," *i.e.* a back which was arched above or rounded off,[1] and יָדֹת, arms, *i.e.* arms on both sides of the seat (מְקוֹם הַשֶּׁבֶת), and two lions standing by the side of the arms. Beside this there were twelve lions upon the six steps, namely two upon each step, one on this side and one on that. Instead of אֲרָיִים (ver. 20) we find אֲרָיוֹת in ver. 19, just as we do in both verses of the Chronicles, not because the reference is to artificial, inanimate figures and not to natural lions, as Thenius supposes, but because the plural ending ־ִים is an unusual one with this word; and even where natural lions are spoken of, we always find אֲרָיוֹת in other passages (cf. Judg. xiv. 5; 2 Sam. i. 23; 2 Kings xvii. 25; Song of Sol. iv. 8, etc.). The lions were symbols of the ruler's authority; and the twelve lions upon the steps may possibly have pointed to the rule over the twelve tribes of Israel, which was concentrated in the throne; not "watchers of the throne," as Thenius thinks. This throne was so splendid a work, that the historian observes that nothing of the kind had ever been made for any other kingdom. Upon the early Assyrian monuments we do indeed find high seats depicted, which are very artistically worked, and provided with backs and arms, and some with the arms supported by figures of animals (see Layard's *Nineveh and its Remains,* vol. ii. p. 301), but none resembling Solomon's throne. It is not till a later age that the more splendid thrones appear (*vid.* Rosenmüller, *A. u. N. Morgenland,* iii. pp. 176 sqq.).—Vers. 21, 22. The drinking vessels of Solomon also were all of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon of costly gold (סָגוּר: see at ch. vi. 20). Silver was counted as nothing, because the Tarshish fleet arrived once in three years, bringing gold, silver, etc. (see at ch. ix. 28).

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[1] Instead of וְרֹאשׁ עָגוֹל לַכִּסֵּה מֵאַחֲרָיו we have in the Chronicles וְכֶבֶשׁ בַּזָּהָב לַכִּסֵּא מָאֳחָזִים, "and a footstool in gold fastened to the throne" (the plural מָאֳחָזִים refers to the footstool and the steps). Now, however easily מאחזים may have been written by mistake for מאחריו, כבשׁ זהב cannot have grown out of ראשׁ עגול by any such mistake. The *quid-pro-quo* of the LXX. for ראשׁ עָגוֹל, *προτομαὶ μόσχων*, in which עָגוֹל is certainly confounded with עֵגֶל, does not warrant the conjecture of Thenius, that the Chronicler found עֵגֶל in his original and substituted כֶּבֶשׂ (lamb), whereupon כֶּבֶשׂ (lamb) was changed by another hand into כֶּבֶשׁ, footstep, and ראשׁ was dropped altogether.

In vers. 23–29 everything that had to be stated concerning the wealth, wisdom, and revenue of Solomon is summed up as a conclusion (cf. 2 Chron. ix. 22–28 and i. 14–17).—Vers. 23 and 24 point back to ch. v. 9–14. וַיִּגְדַּל: Solomon became greater, not was greater, on account of the *Vâv consec.* כָּל־הָאָרֶץ, all the world, corresponds to כָּל־הָעַמִּים in ch. v. 14. The foreigners out of all lands, who came on account of his wisdom, brought Solomon presents: gold and silver vessels, clothes (שְׂלָמוֹת, court dresses, which are still customary presents in the East), נֶשֶׁק, armour, spices, horses and mules.—Ver. 26 is simply a repetition of ch. v. 6 (compare also ch. ix. 19); and ver. 27 is merely a further extension of ver. 21. The words of ver. 27, "Solomon made silver like stones in Jerusalem, and cedars like the sycamores in the lowland for abundance," are a hyperbolical description of his collection of enormous quantities of precious metals and costly wood. שִׁקְמִים, *sycomori,* mulberry fig-trees, are very rare in Palestine in its present desolate state (see Rob. *Pal.* iii. 27), and are only met in any abundance in Egypt; but in ancient times they abounded in the lowlands of Palestine to such an extent, that they were used as common building wood (*vid.* Isa. ix. 9, on which Theodoret observes, *τούτων (συκαμίνων) ἡ Παλαιστίνη πεπλήρωται*). According to 1 Chron. xxvii. 28, the sycamore forests in the lowland of Judah were royal domains.—Vers. 28, 29 (cf. 2 Chron. i. 16, 17). "And (as for) the going out of horses from Egypt for Solomon, a company of king's merchants fetched (horses) for a definite price." This is the only possible explanation of the verse according to the Masoretic punctuation; but to obtain it, the first מִקְוֵה must be connected with סֹחֲרֵי in opposition to the accents, and the second must be pointed מִקְוָה. This is the rendering adopted by Gesenius in his *Thesaurus* and *Lexicon* (ed. Dietr. *s. v.* מִקְוֵה). The meaning company or troop may certainly be justified from Gen. i. 10, Ex. vii. 19, and Lev. xi. 36, where the word signifies an accumulation of water. Still there is something very strange not only in the application of the word both to a company of traders and also to a troop of horses, but also in the omission of סוּסִים (horses) after the second מִקְוֵה. Hence the rendering of the LXX. and Vulgate deserves attention, and may possibly be the one to be preferred (as Michaelis, Bertheau *on Chron.*, and Movers assume). The translators of these versions have taken מקוה as the name of a place, *ἐξ Ἐκουέ*, or rather *ἐκ Κουέ, de Coa.*[1] According to this, the rendering would be: "And as for the going out of horses from Egypt and Koa (or Kawe) for Solomon, the king's traders fetched them from Koa (Kawe) for a fixed price." It is true that the situation of *Koa* cannot be more precisely defined; but there seems to be very little doubt that it was a place for the collection of customs upon the frontier of Egypt.—Ver. 29. "And there came up and went out a chariot from Egypt for six hundred shekels of silver, and a horse for a hundred and fifty shekels; and so (in the same manner as for Solomon) they led them out for all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Aram through their hand." מֶרְכָּבָה, like רֶכֶב in 2 Sam. viii. 4, x. 18, and Ezek. xxxix. 20, denotes a chariot with the team of horses belonging to it, possibly three horses (see at ch. v. 6), not *quadriga* (Clericus and others), or two draught horses and two as a reserve (Thenius). For the inference, that if a horse cost 150 shekels, a team of four would be obtained for 600, is not quite a certain one, since the chariot itself would certainly not be given in. A hundred and fifty shekels are a little more than 130 thalers (£19, 10s.—Tr.), and 600 would be 525 thalers (£78, 15s.). These amounts are sufficient to show how untenable the opinion of Movers is, that the sums mentioned are not the prices paid for horses and chariots, but the payment made for their exit, or the customs duty. And his other opinion is equally erroneous, namely that the chariots and horses were state carriages and horses of luxury intended for the king.—The merchants are called the king's traders, not because a portion of their profits went into the royal treasury as the tax upon trade (Bertheau), nor as the brokers who bought for the king (Thenius), but because they carried on their trade for the king's account. בְּיָדָם cannot be adduced as evidence to the contrary; for linguists require no proof that this cannot mean "*auf ihre Hand,*" as Thenius assumes. Böttcher's explanation is the right one, namely, "through their hand," inasmuch as they brought the horses and chariots themselves even to those kings who lived at a greater distance, without employing intermediate agents. The kings of the חִתִּים, the Hittites in the wider sense (= Canaanites, as in Josh. i. 4, 2 Kings vii. 6, Ezek. xvi. 3), and of Aram, were in part Solomon's vassals, since his rule extended over all the Canaanites with the exception of the Phœnicians, and over several kingdoms of Aram.

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[1] That Κουέ or Κωέ is the earliest reading of the LXX., and not the ἐκ Θεκουέ of the Cod. Vat. and Alex., is very evident from the statement which we find in the *Onomast.* of Eusebius (*ed. Larsow et. Parth.* p. 260), Κώδ, πλησίον Αἰγύπτου; for which Jerome has *Coa, quæ est juxta Ægyptum*, after the Vulgate.

CHAP. XI. SOLOMON'S POLYGAMY AND IDOLATRY. HIS OPPONENTS, AND HIS DEATH.

The idolatry into which Solomon fell in his old age appears so strange in a king so wise and God-fearing as Solomon showed himself to be at the dedication of the temple, that many have been quite unable to reconcile the two, and have endeavoured to show either that Solomon's worship of idols was psychologically impossible, or that the knowledge of God and the piety attributed to him are unhistorical. But great wisdom and a refined knowledge of God are not a defence against the folly of idolatry, since this has its roots in the heart, and springs from sensual desires and the lust of the flesh. The cause assigned in the biblical account for Solomon's falling away from the Lord, is that he loved many strange, *i.e.* foreign or heathen, wives, who turned his heart from Jehovah to their own gods in his old age. Consequently the falling away did not take place suddenly, but gradually, as Solomon got old, and was not a complete renunciation of the worship of Jehovah, to whom he offered solemn sacrifices three times a year, and that certainly to the day of his death (ch. ix. 25), but consisted simply in the fact that his heart was no longer thoroughly devoted to the Lord (ch. xi. 4), and that he inclined towards the idols of his foreign wives and built them altars (vers. 5–8); that is to say, it consisted merely in a syncretic mixture of Jehovah-worship and idolatry, by which the worship which should be paid solely and exclusively to the true God was not only injured, but was even turned into idolatry itself, Jehovah the only true God being placed on a level with the worthless gods of the heathen. —Love to foreign wives no doubt presupposed an inclination to foreign customs ; it was not, however, idolatry in itself, but was still reconcilable with that sincere worship of Jehovah which is attributed to Solomon in the earlier years of his reign. At the same time it was a rock on which living faith and true adherence to the Lord might at last suffer shipwreck. And we may even infer from the repeated warnings of God (ch. iii. 14, vi. 12, ix. 4), that from the earliest years of his reign Solomon was in danger of falling into idolatry. This danger did, indeed, spring in his case from his inclination to foreign customs ; but this inclination was again influenced by many of the circumstances of his reign, which we must regard as contributing more remotely to his eventual fall. And among the first of these we must place the splendour and glory of his reign. Through long and severe conflicts David had succeeded in conquering all the enemies of Israel, and had not only helped his people to peace and prosperity, but had also raised the kingdom to great power and glory. And Solomon inherited these fruits of his father's reign. Under the blessings of peace he was not only able to carry out the work of building a splendid temple, which his father had urged upon him, but was also able, by a wise use of the sources already existing and by opening new ones, still further to increase the treasures which he had collected, and thereby to exalt the splendour of his kingdom. The treaty with Hiram of Tyre, which enabled him to execute the intended state buildings in Jerusalem, was followed by alliances for the establishment of a widespread commerce both by sea and land, through which ever increasing treasures of gold and silver, and other costly goods, were brought to the king. As this accumulation of riches helped to nourish his inclination to a love of show, and created a kind of luxury which was hardly reconcilable with the simplicity of manners and the piety of a servant of God, so the foreign trade led to a toleration of heathen customs and religious views which could not fail to detract from the reverence paid to Jehovah, however little the trade with foreigners might be in itself at variance with the nature of the Old Testament kingdom of God. And again, even the great wisdom of king Solomon might also become a rock endangering his life of faith, not so much in the manner suggested by J. J. Hess (*Gesch. Dav. u. Sal.* ii. p. 413), namely, that an excessive thirst for inquiry might easily seduce him from the open and clearer regions of the kingdom of truth into the darker ones of the kingdom of lies, *i.e.* of magic, and so lead him to the paths of superstition; as because the widespread fame of his wisdom brought distinguished and wise men from distant lands to Jerusalem and into alliance with the king, and their homage flattered the vanity of the human heart, and led to a greater and greater toleration of heathen ways. But these things are none of them blamed in the Scriptures, because they did not of necessity lead to idolatry, but might simply give an indirect impulse to it, by lessening the wall of partition between the worship of the true God and that of heathen deities, and making apostasy a possible thing. The Lord Himself had promised and had given Solomon wisdom, riches, and glory above all other kings for the glorification of his kingdom; and these gifts of God merely contributed to estrange his heart from the true God for the simple reason, that Solomon forgot the commandments of the Lord and suffered himself to be besotted by the lusts of the flesh, not only so as to love many foreign wives, but so as also to take to himself wives from the nations with which Israel was not to enter into any close relationship whatever.

Vers. 1–13. SOLOMON'S LOVE OF MANY WIVES AND IDOLATRY.—Vers. 1, 2. "Solomon loved many foreign wives, and that along with the daughter of Pharaoh." וְאֶת־בַּת פ׳, standing as it does between נָשִׁים נָכְרִיּוֹת ר׳ and מוֹאֲבִיּוֹת, cannot mean "and especially the daughter of P.," as Thenius follows the earlier commentators in supposing, but must mean, as in ver. 25, "and that with, or along with," *i.e.* actually beside the daughter of Pharaoh. She is thereby distinguished from the foreign wives who turned away Solomon's heart from the Lord, so that the blame pronounced upon those marriages does not apply to his marriage to the Egyptian princess (see at ch. iii. 1). All that is blamed is that, in opposition to the command in Deut. xvii. 17, Solomon loved (1) *many* foreign wives, and (2) Moabitish, Ammonitish, and other wives, of the nations with whom the Israelites were not to intermarry. All that the law expressly prohibited was marriage with Canaanitish women (Deut. vii. 1–3; Ex. xxxiv. 16); consequently the words "of the nations," etc., are not to be taken as referring merely to the Sidonian and Hittite women (J. D. Mich.); but this prohibition is extended here to all the tribes enumerated in ver. 2, just as in Ezra ix. 2 sqq., x. 3, Neh. xiii. 23; not from a rigour surpassing the law, but in accordance with the spirit of the law, namely, because the reason appended to the law, *ne in idololatriam a superstitiosis mulieribus pellicerentur* (Clericus), applied to all these nations. The Moabites and Ammonites, moreover, were not to be received into the congregation at all, not even to the tenth generation, and of the Edomites only the children in the third generation were to be received (Deut. xxiii. 4, 8, 9). There was all the less reason, therefore, for permitting marriages with them, that is to say, so long as they retained their nationality or their heathen ways. The words לֹא־תָבֹאוּ . . . בָכֶם are connected in form with Josh. xxiii. 12, but, like the latter, they really rest upon Ex. xxxiv. 16 and Deut. vii. 1–3. In the last clause בָהֶם is used with peculiar emphasis: Solomon clave to these nations, of which God had said such things, to love, *i.e.* to enter into the relation of love or into the marriage relation, with them. דָבַק is used of the attachment of a man to his wife (Gen. ii. 4) and also to Jehovah (Deut. iv. 4, x. 20, etc.).—Vers. 3–8 carry out still further what has been already stated. In ver. 3 the taking of *many* wives is first explained. He had seven hundred נָשִׁים שָׂרוֹת, women of the first rank, who were exalted into princesses, and three hundred concubines. These are in any case round numbers, that is to say, numbers which simply approximate to the reality, and are not to be understood as affirming that Solomon had all these wives and concubines at the same time, but as including all the women who were received into his harem during the whole of his reign, whereas the sixty queens and eighty concubines mentioned in Song of Sol. vi. 8 are to be understood as having been present in the court at one time. Even in this respect Solomon sought to equal the rulers of other nations, if not to surpass them.[1]—These women "inclined his heart," *i.e.* determined the inclination of his heart. Ver. 4. In the time of old age, when the flesh gained the supremacy over the spirit, they turned his heart to other gods, so that it was no longer wholly with Jehovah, his God. שָׁלֵם, *integer, i.e.* entirely devoted to the Lord (cf. ch. viii. 61), like the heart of David his father, who had indeed grievously sinned, but had not fallen into idolatry. —Vers. 5–8. He walked after the Ashtaroth, etc. According to ver. 7, the idolatry here condemned consisted in the fact that he built altars to the deities of all his foreign wives, upon which they offered incense and sacrifice to their idols. It is not stated that he himself also offered sacrifice to these idols. But even the building of altars for idols was a participation in idolatry which was irreconcilable with true fidelity to the Lord. עַשְׁתֹּרֶת, Astarte, was the chief female deity of all the Canaanitish tribes; her worship was also transplanted from Tyre to Carthage, where it flourished greatly. She was a moon-goddess, whom the Greeks and Romans called sometimes *Aphrodite*, sometimes *Urania, Σεληναίη, Cœlestis,* and *Juno* (see the Comm. on Judg. ii. 13). מִלְכֹּם, which is called מֹלֶךְ (without the article) in ver. 7, and מַלְכָּם in Jer. xlix. 1, 3, and Amos i. 15, the abomination of the Ammonites, must not be confounded with the *Molech* (הַמֹּלֶךְ, always with the article) of the early Canaanites, to whom children were offered in sacrifice in the valley of Benhinnom from the time of Ahaz onwards (see the Comm. on Lev. xviii. 21), since they had both of them their separate places of worship in Jerusalem (cf. 2 Kings xxiii. 10 and 13), and nothing is ever said about the offering of children in sacrifice to Milcom; although the want of information prevents us from determining the precise distinction between the two. *Milcom* was at any rate related to the *Chemosh* of the Moabites mentioned in ver. 7; for Chemosh is also described as a god of the Ammonites in Judg. xi. 24, whereas everywhere else he is called the god of the Moabites (Num. xxi. 29; Amos i. 15, etc.). *Chemosh* was a sun-god, who was worshipped as king of his people and as a god of war, and as such is depicted upon coins with a sword, lance, and shield in his hands, and with two torches by his side (see at Num. xxi. 29). The enumeration of the different idols is incomplete; Chemosh being omitted in ver. 5, and Astarte, to whom Solomon also built an altar in Jerusalem, according to 2 Kings xxiii. 13, in ver. 7. Still this incompleteness does not warrant our filling up the supposed gaps by emendations of the text. וַיַּעַשׂ הָרַע וגו׳, as in Judg. ii. 11, iii. 7, etc. מִלֵּא אַחֲרֵי יי׳, a pregnant expression for מִלֵּא לָלֶכֶת אח׳ יי׳, as in Num. xiv. 24, xxxii. 11, 12, etc. —These places of sacrifice (בָּמָה, see at ch. iii. 2) Solomon built upon the mountain in front, *i.e.* to the east, of Jerusalem, and, according to the more precise account in 2 Kings xxiii. 13, to the right, that is to say, on the southern side, of the Mount of Corruption,—in other words, upon the southern peak of the Mount of Olives; and consequently this peak has been called in church tradition from the time of Brocardus onwards, either *Mons Offensionis*, after the Vulgate rendering of הַר הַמַּשְׁחִית in 2 Kings xxiii. 13, or *Mons Scandali*, Mount of Offence (*vid.* Rob. *Pal.* i. 565 and 566).—Ver. 8. "So did he for all his foreign wives," viz. built altars for their gods; for instance, in addition to those already named, he also built an altar for Astarte. These three altars, which are only mentioned in the complete account in 2 Kings xxiii. 13, were sufficient for all the deities of the foreign wives. For the Hittites and Edomites do not appear to have had any deities of their own that were peculiar to themselves. The Hittites no doubt worshipped Astarte in common with the Sidonians, and the Edomites probably worshipped Milcom. In the whole of the Old Testament the only place in which gods of the Edomites are mentioned is 2 Chron. xxv. 20, and there no names are given. Of course we must except Pharaoh's daughter, according to ver. 1, and the remarks already made in connection with that verse; for she brought no idolatrous worship to Jerusalem, and consequently even in later times we do not find the slightest trace of Egyptian idolatry in Jerusalem and Judah.[1] Burning incense (מַקְטִירוֹת) is mentioned before sacrificing (מְזַבְּחוֹת), because vegetable offerings took precedence of animal sacrifices in the nature-worship of Hither Asia (*vid.* Bähr, *Symbolik*, ii. pp. 237 sqq.).—Vers. 9 sqq. Through this apostasy from the Lord his God, who had appeared to him twice (ch. iii. 5 sqq. and ix. 2 sqq.) and had warned him against idolatry (וְצִוָּה is a continuation of the participle הַנִּרְאָה), Solomon drew down upon himself the anger of Jehovah. The emphasis lies upon the fact that God had appeared to him Himself for the purpose of warning him, and had not merely caused him to be warned by prophets, as Theodoret has explained. In consequence of this, the following announcement is made to him, no doubt through the medium of a prophet, possibly Ahijah (ver. 29): "Because this has come into thy mind, and thou hast not kept my covenant, . . . I will tear the kingdom from thee and give it to thy servant; nevertheless I will not do it in thy lifetime for thy father David's sake: howbeit I will not tear away the whole kingdom; one tribe I will give to thy son." In this double limitation of the threatened forfeiture of the kingdom there is clearly manifested the goodness of God (*δείκνυσι τὴν ἄμετρον ἀγαθότητα*—Theodoret); not, however, with reference to Solomon, who had forfeited the divine mercy through his idolatry, but with regard to David and the selection of Jerusalem: that is to say, not from any special preference for David and Jerusalem, but in order that the promise made to David (2 Sam. vii.), and the choice of Jerusalem as the place where His name should be revealed which was connected with that promise, might stand immoveably as an act of grace, which no sin of men could overturn (*vid.* ver. 36). For שֵׁבֶט אֶחָד see the Comm. on vers. 31, 32.

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[1] Nevertheless these numbers, especially that of the wives who were raised to the rank of princesses, appear sufficiently large to suggest the possibility of an error in the numeral letters, although Oriental rulers carried this custom to a very great length, as for example Darius Codomannus, of whom it is related that he took with him 360 *pellices* on his expedition against Alexander (see Curtius, iii. 3, 24; Athen. *Deipnos.* iii. 1).

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[1] From the fact that these places of sacrifice still existed even in the time of Josiah, notwithstanding the reforms of Asa, Jehoshaphat, Joash, and Hezekiah, which rooted out all public idolatry, at least in Jerusalem, Movers infers (*Phöniz.* ii. 3, p. 207), and that not without reason, that there was an essential difference between these sacred places and the other seats of Israelitish idolatry which were exterminated, namely, that in their national character they were also the places of worship for the foreigners settled in and near Jerusalem, *e.g.* the Sidonian, Ammonitish, and Moabitish merchants, which were under the protection of treaties, since this is the only ground on which

Vers. 14–40. SOLOMON'S OPPONENTS.—Although the punishment with which Solomon was threatened for his apostasy was not to be inflicted till after his death, the Lord raised up several adversaries even during his lifetime, who endangered the peace of his kingdom, and were to serve as constant reminders that he owed his throne and his peaceable rule over the whole of the kingdom inherited from his father solely to the mercy, the fidelity, and the long-suffering of God.—The rising up of Hadad and Rezon took place even before the com-

we can satisfactorily explain their undisturbed continuance at Jerusalem. But this would not preclude their having been built by Solomon for the worship of his foreign wives; on the other hand, it is much easier to explain their being built in the front of Jerusalem, and opposite to the temple of Jehovah, if from the very first regard was had to the foreigners who visited Jerusalem. The objection offered by Thenius to this view, which Bertheau had already adopted (*zur Gesch. der Isr.* p. 323), has been shown by Böttcher (*N. exeg. Ährenl.* ii. p. 95) to be utterly untenable.

mencement of Solomon's idolatry, but it is brought by וַיָּקֶם יְהוָֹה (ver. 14) into logical connection with the punishment with which he is threatened in consequence of that idolatry, because it was not till a later period that it produced any perceptible effect upon his government, yet it ought from the very first to have preserved him from self-security.

Vers. 14–22. The *first* adversary was *Hadad* the Edomite, a man of royal birth. The name הֲדַד (אֲדַד in ver. 17, according to an interchange of ה and א which is by no means rare) was also borne by a præ-Mosaic king of Edom (Gen. xxxvi. 35), from which we may see that it was not an uncommon name in the royal family of the Edomites. But the conjecture of Ewald and Thenius, that our Hadad was a grandson of Hadar, the last of the kings mentioned there, is quite a groundless one, since it rests upon the false assumption that Hadar (called Hadad in the Chronicles by mistake) reigned in the time of David (see the Comm. on Gen. xxxvi. 31 sqq.). הוּא before בֶּאֱדוֹם stands in the place of the relative אֲשֶׁר: "of royal seed he = who was of the royal seed in Edom" (cf. Ewald, § 332, *a*).—Vers. 15 sqq. When David had to do with the Edomites, . . . Hadad fled. הָיָה אֶת is analogous to הָיָה עִם, to have to do with any one, though in a hostile sense, as in the phrase to go to war with (אֵת) a person, whereas הָיָה עִם generally means to be upon the side of any one. The correctness of the reading בִּהְיוֹת is confirmed by all the ancient versions, which have simply paraphrased the meaning in different ways. For Böttcher has already shown that the LXX. did not read בְּהַכּוֹת, as Thenius supposes. The words from בַּעֲלוֹת to the end of ver. 16 form explanatory circumstantial clauses. On the circumstance itself, compare 2 Sam. viii. 13, 14, with the explanation given there. "The slain," whom Joab went to bury, were probably not the Israelites who had fallen in the battle in the Salt valley (2 Sam. viii. 13), but those who had been slain on the invasion of the land by the Edomites, and still remained unburied. After their burial Joab defeated the Edomites in the valley of Salt, and remained six months in Edom till he had cut off every male. "All Israel" is the whole of the Israelitish army. "Every male" is of course only the men capable of bearing arms, who fell into the hands of the Israelites; for "Hadad and others fled, and the whole of the Idumæan race was not extinct" (Clericus). Then *Hadad* fled, while yet a little boy, with some of his father's

Edomitish servants, to go to Egypt, going first of all to Midian and thence to Paran. The country of *Midian* cannot be more precisely defined, inasmuch as we meet with Midianites sometimes in the peninsula of Sinai on the eastern side of the Elanitic Gulf, where Edrisi and Abulfeda mention a city of Madian (see at Ex. ii. 15), and sometimes on the east of the Moabitish territory (see at Num. xxii. 4 and Judg. vi. 1). Here, at any rate, we must think of the neighbourhood of the Elanitic Gulf, though not necessarily of the city of Madian, five days' journey to the south of Aela; and probably of the country to which Moses fled from Egypt. *Paran* is the desert of that name between the mountains of Sinai and the south of Canaan (see at Num. x. 12), through which the Haj route from Egypt by Elath to Mecca still runs. Hadad would be obliged to take the road by Elath in order to go to Egypt, even if he had taken refuge with the Midianites on the east of Moab and Edom.—Vers. 18 sqq. From Paran they took men with them as guides through the desert. Thus Hadad came to Egypt, where Pharaoh received him hospitably, and gave them a house and maintenance (לֶחֶם), and also assigned him land (אֶרֶץ) to cultivate for the support of the fugitives who had come with him, and eventually, as he found great favour in his eyes, gave him for a wife the sister of his own wife, queen *Tachpenes*, who bare him a son, *Genubath*. This son was weaned by Tachpenes in the royal palace, and then brought up among (with) the children of Pharaoh, the royal princes. According to Rosellini and Wilkinson (Ges. *Thes.* p. 1500), Tachpenes was also the name of a female deity of Egypt. The wife of Pharaoh is called הַגְּבִירָה, *i.e.* the mistress among the king's wives, as being the principal consort. In the case of the kings of Judah this title is given to the king's mother, probably as the president in the harem, whose place was taken by the reigning queen after her death. The weaning, probably a family festival as among the Hebrews (Gen. xxi. 8) and other ancient nations (*vid.* Dougtæi *Analecta ss.* i. 22 sq.), was carried out by the queen in the palace, because the boy was to be thereby adopted among the royal children, to be brought up with them.—Vers. 21, 22. When Hadad heard in Egypt of the death of David and Joab, he asked permission of Pharaoh to return to his own country. Pharaoh replied, "What is there lacking to thee with me?" This answer was a pure expression of love and attachment to Hadad, and involved the request that he would remain. But Hadad answered, "No, but let me go." We are not told that Pharaoh then let him go, but this must be supplied; just as in Num. x. 32 we are not told what Hobab eventually did in consequence of Moses' request, but it has to be supplied from the context. The return of Hadad to his native land is clearly to be inferred from the fact that, according to vers. 14, and 25, he rose up as an adversary of Solomon.[1]

Vers. 23–25. A *second* adversary of Solomon was *Rezon*, the son of Eliadah (for the name see at ch. xv. 18), who had fled from his lord Hadadezer, king of Zobah, and who became the captain of a warlike troop (גְּדוּד), when David smote *them* (אֹתָם), *i.e.* the troops of his lord (2 Sam. viii. 3, 4). Rezon probably fled from his lord for some reason which is not assigned, when the latter was engaged in war with David, before his complete overthrow, and collected together a company from the fugitives, with which he afterwards marched to Damascus, and having taken possession of that city, made himself king over it. This probably did not take place till towards the close of David's reign, or even after his death, though it was at the very beginning of Solomon's reign; for "he became an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon (*i.e.* during the whole of his reign), and that with (beside) the mischief which Hadad did, and he abhorred Israel (*i.e.* became disgusted with the Israelitish rule), and became king over Aram." אֲשֶׁר הֲדָד is an abbreviated expression, to which עָשָׂה may easily be supplied, as it has been by the LXX. (*vid.* Ewald, § 292, *b*, *Anm.*). It is impossible to gather from these few words in what the mischief done by Hadad to Solomon con-

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[1] The LXX. have supplied what is missing *e conjectura:* καὶ ἀνέστρεψεν Ἄδερ (*i.e.* Hadad) εἰς τὴν γῆν αὐτοῦ· αὕτη ἡ κακία ἣν ἐποίησεν Ἄδερ· καὶ ἐβαρυθύμησεν Ἰσραήλ, καὶ ἐβασίλευσεν ἐν γῇ Ἐδώμ. Thenius proposes to alter the Hebrew text accordingly, and draws this conclusion, that "shortly after the accession of Solomon, Hadad, having returned from Egypt, wrested from the power of the Israelites the *greatest* part of Edom, probably the true mountain-land of Edom, so that certain places situated in the plain, particularly Ezion-geber, remained in the hands of the Israelites, and intercourse could be maintained with that port through the *Arabah*, even though not quite without disturbance." This conclusion, which is described as "historical," is indeed at variance with 1 Kings xxii. 48, according to which Edom had no king even in the time of Jehoshaphat, but only a vicegerent, and also with 2 Kings viii. 20, according to which it was not till the reign of Jehoshaphat's son Joram that Edom fell away from Judah. But this discrepancy Thenius sets aside by the remark at 1 Kings xxii. 48, that in Jehoshaphat's time the family of Hadad had probably died out, and Jehoshaphat prudently availed himself of the disputes which arose concerning the succession to enforce Judah's right of supremacy over Edom, and to appoint first a vicegerent and then a new king, though perhaps one not absolutely dependent upon him. But this conjecture as to the relation in which Jehoshaphat stood to Edom is proved to be an imaginary fiction by the fact that, although the history does indeed mention a revolt of the Edomites from Judah (2 Chron. xx.; see at 1 Kings xxii. 48), it not only says nothing whatever about the dying out of the royal family of Hadad or about disputes concerning the succession, but it does not even hint at them.—But with regard to the additions made to this passage by the LXX., to which even Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 276) attributes historical worth, though without building upon them such confident historical combinations as Thenius, we may easily convince ourselves of their critical worthlessness, if we only pass our eye over the whole section (vers. 14–25), instead of merely singling out those readings of the LXX. which support our preconceived opinions, and overlooking all the rest, after the thoroughly unscientific mode of criticism adopted by a Thenius or Böttcher.

For example, the LXX. have connected together the two accounts respecting the adversaries Hadad and Rezon who rose up against Solomon (ver. 14 and ver. 23), which are separated in the Hebrew text, and have interpolated what is stated concerning Rezon in vers. 23 and 24 after הָאֲרַמִּי in ver. 14, and consequently have been obliged to alter וַיְהִי שָׂטָן וגו' in ver. 25 into *καὶ ἦσαν Σατάν*, because they had previously cited Hadad and Rezon as adversaries, whereas in the Hebrew text these words apply to Rezon alone. But the rest of ver. 25, namely the words from וְאֶת־הָרָעָה onwards, they have not given till the close of ver. 22 (LXX.); and in order to connect this with what precedes, they have interpolated the words *καὶ ἀνέστρεψεν Ἄδερ εἰς τὴν γῆν αὐτοῦ*. The Alexandrians were induced to resort to this intertwining of the accounts concerning Hadad and Rezon, which are kept separate in the Hebrew text, partly by the fact that Hadad and Rezon are introduced as adversaries of Solomon with the very same words (vers. 14 and 23), but more especially by the fact that in ver. 25 of the Hebrew text the injury done to Solomon by Hadad is merely referred to in a supplementary manner in connection with Rezon's enterprise, and indeed is inserted parenthetically within the account of the latter. The Alexandrian translators did not know what to make of this, because they did not understand וְאֶת־הָרָעָה and took וְאֵת for זֹאת, *αὕτη ἡ κακία*. With this reading וַיָּקָץ which follows was necessarily understood as referring to Hadad; and as Hadad was an Edomite, וַיִּמְלֹךְ עַל־אֲרָם had to be altered into *ἐβασίλευσεν ἐν γῇ Ἐδώμ*. Consequently all the alterations of the LXX. in this section are simply the result of an arbitrary treatment of the Hebrew text, which they did not really understand, and consist of a collocation of all that is homogeneous, as every reader of this translation who is acquainted with the original text must see so clearly even at the very beginning of the chapter, where the number of Solomon's wives is taken from ver. 3 of the Hebrew text and interpolated into ver. 1, that, as Thenius observes, "the true state of the case can only be overlooked from superficiality of observation or from preconceived opinion."

sisted.[1] Rezon, on the other hand, really obtained possession of the rule over Damascus. Whether at the beginning or not till the end of Solomon's reign cannot be determined, since all that is clearly stated is that he was Solomon's adversary during the whole of his reign, and attempted to revolt from him from the very beginning. If, however, he made himself king of Damascus in the earliest years of his reign, he cannot have maintained his sway very long, since Solomon afterwards built or fortified Tadmor in the desert, which he could not have done if he had not been lord over Damascus, as the caravan road from Gilead to Tadmor (Palmyra) went past Damascus.[2]

Vers. 26–40. *Attempted rebellion of Jeroboam the Ephraimite.*—Hadad and Rezon are simply described as adversaries (שָׂטָן) of Solomon; but in the case of Jeroboam it is stated that "he lifted up his hand against the king," *i.e.* he stirred up a tumult or rebellion. הֵרִים יָד בְּ is synonymous with נָשָׂא יָד בְּ in 2 Sam. xviii. 28, xx. 21. It is not on account of this rebellion, which was quickly suppressed by Solomon, but on account of the later enterprise of Jeroboam, that his personal history is so minutely detailed. Jeroboam was an Ephraimite (אֶפְרָתִי, as in 1 Sam. i. 1, Judg. xii. 5) of *Zereda, i.e. Zarthan,* in the Jordan valley (see ch. vii. 46), son of a widow, and עֶבֶד, *i.e.* not a subject (Then.), but an officer, of Solomon. All that is related of his rebellion against the king is the circumstances under which it took place. זֶה הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר, this is how it stands with, as in Josh. v. 4. Solomon built *Millo* (ch. ix. 15), and closed the rent (the defile?) in the city of David. פֶּרֶץ, *ruptura,* cannot be a rent or breach in the wall of the city of David, inasmuch as חוֹמָה is not added, and since the fortification of the city by David (2 Sam. v. 9) no hostile attack had ever been made upon Jerusalem; but in all probability it denotes the ravine which separated Zion from Moriah and Ophel, the future *Tyropœon*, through the closing of which the temple mountain was brought within the city wall, and the fortification of the city of David was completed (Thenius, Ewald, *Gesch.* iii. p. 330). Compare מִפְרָץ, a gap in the coast, a bay. On the occasion of this building, Jeroboam proved himself a גִּבּוֹר חַיִל, *i.e.* a very able and energetic man; so that when Solomon saw the young man, that he was doing work, *i.e.* urging it forward, he committed to him the oversight over all the heavy work of the house of Joseph. It must have been while occupying this post that he attempted a rebellion against Solomon. This is indicated by זֶה הַדָּבָר וגו' in ver. 27. According to ch. xii. 4, the reason for the rebellion is to be sought for in the appointment of the Ephraimites to heavy works. This awakened afresh the old antipathy of that tribe to Judah, and Jeroboam availed himself of this to instigate a rebellion.—Vers. 29 sqq. At that time the prophet Ahijah met him in the field and disclosed to him the word of the Lord, that he should become king over Israel. בָּעֵת הַהִיא: at that time, viz. the time when Jeroboam had become overseer over the heavy works, and not after he had already stirred up the rebellion. For the whole of the account in vers. 29–39 forms part of the explanation of הֵרִים יָד בַּמֶּלֶךְ which commences with ver. 27*b*, so that וַיְהִי בָּעֵת הַהִיא is closely connected with וַיַּפְקֵד אֹתוֹ in ver. 28, and there is no such gap in the history as is supposed by Thenius, who builds upon this opinion most untenable conjectures as to the intertwining of different sources. At that time, as Jeroboam was one day going out of Jerusalem, the prophet Ahijah of Shilo (Seilun) met him by the way (בַּדֶּרֶךְ), with a new upper garment wrapped around him; and when they were alone, he rent the new garment, that is to say, his own, not Jeroboam's, as Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 388) erroneously supposes, into twelve pieces, and said to Jeroboam, "Take thee ten pieces, for Jehovah saith, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and give thee ten tribes; and one tribe shall remain to him (Solomon), for David's sake," etc. The new שַׂלְמָה was probably only a large four-cornered cloth, which was thrown over the shoulders like the *Heik* of the Arabs, and enveloped the whole of the upper portion of the body (see my *bibl. Archäol.* ii. pp. 36, 37). By the tearing of the new garment into twelve pieces, of which Jeroboam was to take ten for himself, the prophetic announcement was symbolized in a very emphatic manner. This symbolical action made the promise a completed fact. " As the garment was torn in pieces and lay before the eyes of Jeroboam, so had the division of the kingdom already taken place in the counsel of God" (O. v. Gerlach). There was something significant also in the circumstance that it was a *new* garment, which is stated twice, and indicates the newness, *i.e.* the still young and vigorous condition, of the kingdom (Thenius).

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[1] What Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 7, 6) relates concerning an alliance between Hadad and Rezon for the purpose of making hostile attacks upon Israel, is merely an inference drawn from the text of the LXX., and utterly worthless.

[2] Compare Ewald, *Gesch.* iii. p. 276. It is true that more could be inferred from 2 Chron. viii. 3, if the conquest of the city of Hamath by Solomon were really recorded in that passage, as Bertheau supposes. But although חָזַק עַל is used to signify the conquest of tribes or countries, we cannot infer the conquest of the city of Hamath from the words, "Solomon went to Hamath Zobah וַיֶּחֱזַק עָלֶיהָ and built Tadmor," etc., since all that יחזק עליה distinctly expresses is the establishment of his power over the land of Hamath Zobah. And this Solomon could have done by placing fortifications in that province, because he was afraid of rebellion, even if Hamath Zobah had not actually fallen away from his power.

In the word of God explaining the action it is striking that Jeroboam was to receive *ten* tribes, and the *one* tribe was to remain to Solomon (vers. 31, 32, 35, 36, as in ver. 13). The nation consisted of twelve tribes, and Ahijah had torn his garment into twelve pieces, of which Jeroboam was to take ten; so that there were two remaining. It is evident at once from this, that the numbers are intended to be understood symbolically and not arithmetically. *Ten* as the number of completeness and totality is placed in contrast with *one*, to indicate that all Israel was to be torn away from the house of David, as is stated in ch. xii. 20, " they made Jeroboam king over *all* Israel," and only one single fragment was to be left to the house of Solomon out of divine compassion. This one tribe, however, is not Benjamin, the one tribe beside Judah, as Hupfeld (on Ps. lxxx.), C. a Lap., Mich., and others suppose, but, according to the distinct statement in ch. xii. 20, " the tribe of Judah only." Nevertheless Benjamin belonged to Judah; for, according to ch. xii. 21, Rehoboam gathered together the whole house of Judah *and the tribe of Benjamin* to fight against the house of Israel (which had fallen away), and to bring the kingdom again to himself. And so also in 2 Chron. xi. 3 and 23 Judah and Benjamin are reckoned as belonging to the kingdom of Rehoboam. This distinct prominence given to Benjamin by the side of Judah overthrows the explanation suggested by Seb. Schmidt and others, namely, that the description of the portion left to Rehoboam as *one* tribe is to be explained from the fact that Judah and Benjamin, on the border of which Jerusalem was situated, were regarded in a certain sense as one, and that the little Benjamin was hardly taken into consideration at all by the side of the great Judah. For if Ahijah had regarded Benjamin as one with Judah, he would not have torn his garment into twelve pieces, inasmuch as if Benjamin was to be merged in Judah, or was not to be counted along with it as a distinct tribe, the whole nation could only be reckoned as eleven tribes. Moreover the twelve tribes did not so divide themselves, that Jeroboam really received ten tribes and Rehoboam only one or only two. In reality there were three tribes that fell to the kingdom of Judah, and only nine to the kingdom of Israel, Ephraim and Manasseh being reckoned as two tribes, since the tribe of Levi was not counted in the political classification. The kingdom of Judah included, beside the tribe of Judah, both the tribe of Benjamin and also the tribe of Simeon, the territory of which, according to Josh. xix. 1–9, was within the tribe-territory of Judah and completely surrounded by it, so that the Simeonites would have been obliged to emigrate and give up their tribe-land altogether, if they desired to attach themselves to the kingdom of Israel. But it cannot be inferred from 2 Chron. xv. 9 and xxxiv. 6 that an emigration of the whole tribe had taken place (see also at ch. xii. 17). On the other hand, whilst the northern border of the tribe of Benjamin, with the cities of Bethel, Ramah, and Jericho, fell to the kingdom of Jeroboam (ch. xii. 29, xv. 17, 21, xvi. 34), several of the cities of the tribe of Dan were included in the kingdom of Judah, namely, Ziklag, which Achish had presented to David, and also Zorea and Ajalon (2 Chron. xi. 10, xxviii. 18), in which Judah obtained compensation for the cities of Benjamin of which it had been deprived.[1] Consequently there only remained nine tribes for the northern kingdom. For לְמַעַן עַבְדִּי וגו׳ see at ver. 13. For ver. 33 compare vers. 4–8. The plurals עֲזָבוּנִי, יִשְׁתַּחֲווּ, and הָלְכוּ are not open to critical objection, but are used in accordance with the fact, since Solomon did not practise idolatry alone, but many in the nation forsook the Lord along with him. צִדֹנִין, with a Chaldaic ending (see Ges. § 87, 1, *a*). In vers. 34–36 there follows a more precise explanation: Solomon himself is not to lose the kingdom, but to remain prince all his life, and his son is to retain one tribe; both out of regard to David (*vid.* vers. 12 and 13). כִּי נָשִׂיא אֲשִׁתֶנּוּ, "but I will *set* him for prince," inasmuch as leaving him upon the throne was not merely a divine permission, but a divine act. "That there may be a light to my servant David always before me in Jerusalem." This phrase, which is repeated in ch. xv. 4, 2 Kings viii. 19, 2 Chron. xxi. 7, is to be explained from 2 Sam. xxi. 17, where David's regal rule is called the light which God's grace had kindled for Israel, and affirms that David was never to want a successor upon the throne.—Vers. 37–39. The condition on which the kingdom of Jeroboam was to last was the same as that on which Solomon had also been promised the continuance of his throne in ch. iii. 14, vi. 12, ix. 4, namely, faithful observance of the commandments of God. The expression, "be king over all that thy soul desireth," is explained in what follows by "all Israel." It is evident from this that Jeroboam had aspired after the throne. On the condition named, the Lord would build him a lasting house, as He had done for David (see at 2 Sam. vii. 16). In the case of Jeroboam, however, there is no allusion to a lasting duration of the מַמְלָכָה (kingdom) such as had been ensured to David; for the division of the kingdom was not to last for ever, but the seed of David was simply to be chastised. לְמַעַן זֹאת, for this, *i.e.* because of the apostasy already mentioned; "only not all the days," *i.e.* not for ever. וַאעַנֶּה is explanatory so far as the sense is concerned: "for I will humble." Jeroboam did not fulfil this condition, and therefore his house was extirpated at the death of his son (ch. xv. 28 sqq.).—Ver. 40 is a continuation of וַיָּרֶם יָד בַּמֶּלֶךְ in ver. 26; for vers. 27–39 contain simply an explanation of Jeroboam's lifting up his hand against Solomon. It is obvious from this that Jeroboam had organized a rebellion against Solomon; and also, as ver. 29 is closely connected with ver. 28, that this did not take place till after the prophet had foretold his reigning over ten tribes after Solomon's death. But this did not justify Jeroboam's attempt; nor was Ahijah's announcement an inducement or authority to rebel. Ahijah's conduct was perfectly analogous to that of Samuel in the case of Saul, and is no more to be attributed to selfish motives than his was, as though the prophetic order desired to exalt itself above the human sovereign (Ewald; see, on the other hand, Oehler's article in Herzog's *Cycl.*). For Ahijah expressly declared to Jeroboam that Jehovah would let Solomon remain prince over Israel during the remainder of his life. This deprived Jeroboam of every pretext for rebellion. Moreover the prophet's announcement, even without this restriction, gave him no right to seize with his own hand and by means of rebellion upon that throne which God intended to give to him. Jeroboam might have learned how he ought to act under these circumstances from the example of David, who had far more ground, according to human opinion, for rebelling against Saul, his persecutor and mortal foe, and who nevertheless, even when God had delivered his enemy into his hand, so that he might have slain him, did not venture to lay his hand upon the anointed of the Lord, but waited in pious submission to the leadings of his God, till the Lord opened the way to the throne through the death of Saul. By the side of David's behaviour towards Saul the attempt of Jeroboam has all the appearance of a criminal rebellion, so that Solomon would have been perfectly justified in putting him to death, if Jeroboam had not escaped from his hands by a flight into Egypt.—On *Shishak* see at ch. xiv. 25.

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[1] On the other hand, the fact that in Ps. lxxx. 2 Benjamin is placed between Ephraim and Manasseh is no proof that it belonged to the kingdom of Israel; nor can this be inferred from the fact that Benjamin, as the tribe to which Saul belonged, at the earlier split among the tribes took the side of those which were opposed to David, and that at a still later period a rebellion originated with Benjamin. For in Ps. lxxx. 2 the exposition is disputed, and the jealousy of Benjamin towards Judah appears to have become extinct with the dying out of the royal house of Saul. Again, the explanation suggested by Oehler (Herzog's *Cycl.*) of the repeated statement that the house of David was to receive only *one* tribe, namely, that there was not a single whole tribe belonging to the southern kingdom beside Judah, is by no means satisfactory. For it cannot be proved that any portion of the tribe of Simeon ever belonged to the kingdom of Israel, although the number ten was not complete without it. And it cannot be inferred from 2 Chron. xv. 9 that Simeonites had settled outside their tribe-territory. And, as a rule, single families or households that may have emigrated cannot be taken into consideration as having any bearing upon the question before us, since, according to the very same passage of the Chronicles, many members of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh had emigrated to the kingdom of Judah.

Vers. 41–43. *Conclusion of the history of Solomon.*—Notice of the original works, in which further information can be found concerning his acts and his wisdom (see the Introduction); the length of his reign, viz. forty years; his death, burial, and successor. Solomon did not live to a very great age, since he was not more than twenty years old when he ascended the throne.—Whether Solomon turned to the Lord again with all his heart, a question widely discussed by the older commentators (see Pfeifferi *Dubia vex.* p. 435; Buddei *hist. eccl.* ii. p. 273 sqq.), cannot be ascertained from the Scriptures. If the Preacher *Koheleth*) is traceable to Solomon so far as the leading thoughts are concerned, we should find in this fact an evidence of his conversion, or at least a proof that at the close of his life Solomon discovered the vanity of all earthly possessions and aims, and declared the fear of God to be the only abiding good, with which a man can stand before the judgment of God.

II.—HISTORY OF THE KINGDOMS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH TO THE DESTRUCTION OF THE FORMER.

Chap. xii.–2 Kings xvii.

After the death of Solomon the Israelitish kingdom of God was rent asunder, through the renunciation of the Davidic sovereignty by the ten tribes, into the two kingdoms of Israel (the ten tribes) and Judah; and through this division not only was the external political power of the Israelitish state weakened, but the internal spiritual power of the covenant nation was deeply shaken. And whilst the division itself gave rise to two small and weak kingdoms in the place of one strong nation, the power of both was still further shaken by their attitude towards each other.—The history of the two kingdoms divides itself into three epochs. In the *first* epoch, *i.e.* the period from Jeroboam to Omri in Israel, and from Rehoboam to Asa in Judah (1 Kings xii.–xvi.), they maintained a hostile attitude towards each other, until Israel sustained a severe defeat in a great war with Judah; and on the renewal of its attacks upon Judah, king Asa called the Syrians to his help, and thereby entangled Israel in long and severe conflicts with this powerful neighbouring state. The hostility terminated in the *second* epoch, under Ahab and his sons Ahaziah and Joram in Israel, and under Jehoshaphat, Joram, and Ahaziah of Judah, since the two royal families connected themselves by marriage, and formed an alliance for the purpose of a joint attack upon their foreign foes, until the kings of both kingdoms, viz. Joram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah, were slain at the same time by Jehu (1 Kings xvii.–2 Kings x. 27). This period of union was followed in the *third* epoch, from Jehu in Israel and Joash in Judah onwards, by further estrangement and reciprocal attacks, which led eventually to the destruction of the kingdom of Israel by the Assyrians through the untheocratical policy of Ahaz.

If we take a survey of the attitude of the two kingdoms towards the Lord, the invisible God-King of His people, during these three epochs, to all appearance the idolatry was stronger in the kingdom of Judah than in the kingdom of Israel. For in the latter it is only under Ahab and his two sons, under whom the worship of Baal was raised into the state religion at the instigation of Jezebel the Phœnician wife of Ahab, that we meet with the actual worship of idols. Of the other kings both before and afterwards, all that is related is, that they walked in the ways of Jeroboam, and did not desist from his sin, the worship of the calves. In the kingdom of Judah, on the other hand, out of thirteen kings, only five were so truly devoted to the Lord that they promoted the worship of Jehovah and opposed idolatry (viz. Asa, Jehoshaphat, Uzziah, Jotham, and Hezekiah). Of the others, it is true that Joash and Amaziah walked for a long time in the ways of the Lord, but in the closing years of their reign they forsook the God of their fathers to serve idols and worship them (2 Chron. xxiv. 18 and xxv. 14 sqq.). Even Rehoboam was strengthened at the outset in the worship of Jehovah by the Levites who emigrated from the kingdom of the ten tribes to Judah; but in the course of three years he forsook the law of the Lord, and Judah with him, so that altars of high places, Baal columns, and Asherah idols, were set up on every hill and under every green tree, and there were even male prostitutes in the land, and Judah practised all the abominations of the nations that were cut off before Israel (1 Kings xiv. 23, 24; 2 Chron. xi. 13–17, xii. 1). In all these sins of his father Abijam also walked (1 Kings xv. 3). At a later period, in the reign of Joram, the worship of Baal was transplanted from Israel to Judah and Jerusalem, and was zealously maintained by Ahaziah and his mother Athaliah. It grew still worse under Ahaz, who even went so far as to set up an idolatrous altar in the court of the temple and to close the temple doors, for the purpose of abolishing altogether the legal worship of Jehovah. But notwithstanding this repeated spread of idolatry, the apostasy from the Lord was not so great and deep in the kingdom of Judah as in the kingdom of Israel. This is evident from the fact that idolatry could not strike a firm root there, inasmuch as the kings who were addicted to it were always followed by pious and God-fearing rulers, who abolished the idolatrous abominations, and nearly all of whom had long reigns; so that during the 253 years which intervened between the division of the kingdom and the destruction of the kingdom of the ten tribes, idolatry did not prevail in Judah for much more than fifty-three years,[1] and for about 200 years the worship of the true God was maintained according to the commandment of the law. This constant renewal of a victorious reaction against the foreign deities shows very clearly that the law of God, with its ordinances and institutions for divine worship, had taken firm and deep root in the people and kingdom, and that the reason why idolatry constantly revived and lifted up its head afresh was, that the worship of Jehovah prescribed in the law made no concessions to the tendency to idolatry in hearts at enmity against God. It was different with the kingdom of the ten tribes. There the fact that idolatry only appeared in the reigns of Ahab and his sons and successors, is to be accounted for very simply from the attitude of that kingdom towards the Lord and His lawful worship. Although, for instance, the secession of the ten tribes from the house of David was threatened by God, as a punishment that would come upon Solomon and his kingdom on account of Solomon's idolatry; on the part of the rebellious tribes themselves it was simply the ripe fruit of their evil longing for a less theocratic and more heathen kingdom, and nothing but the work of opposition to the royal house appointed by Jehovah, which had already shown itself more than once in the reign of David, though it had been suppressed again by the weight of his government, which was strong in the Lord.

This opposition became open rebellion against the Lord, when Jeroboam, its head, gave the ten tribes a religious constitution opposed to the will of God for the purpose of establishing his throne, and not only founded a special sanctuary for his subjects, somewhat after the model of the tabernacle or of the temple at Jerusalem, but also set up golden calves as symbols and images of Jehovah the invisible God, to whom no likeness can be made. This image-worship met the wishes and religious cravings of the sensual and carnally-minded people, because it so far filled up the gap between the legal worship of Jehovah and the worship of the nature-deities, that the contrast between Jehovah and the Baalim almost entirely disappeared, and the principal ground was thereby removed for the opposition on the part of the idolatrous nation to the stringent and exclusive worship of Jehovah. In this respect the worship of the calves worked more injuriously upon the religious and moral life of the nation than the open worship of idols. This sin of Jeroboam is therefore "the ground, the root and cause of the very sinful development of the kingdom of Israel, which soon brought down the punishment of God, since even from the earliest time one judgment after another fell openly upon the kingdom. For beside the sin of Jeroboam, that which was the ground of its isolation continued to increase, and gave rise to tumult, opposing aspirants to the throne, and revolutionary movements in the nation, so that the house of Israel was often split up within itself" (Ziegler). Therefore the judgment, with which even from the time of Moses the covenant nation had been threatened in case of obstinate rebellion against its God, namely the judgment of dispersion among the heathen, fell upon the ten tribes much earlier than upon Judah, because Israel had filled up the measure of sin earlier than Judah.

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[1] Namely, fourteen years under Rehoboam, three under Abijah, six under Joram, one under Ahaziah, six under Athaliah, and sixteen under Ahaz,—in all forty-six years; to which we have also to add the closing years of the reigns of Joash and Amaziah.

The chronological computation of this period, both as a whole and in its separate details, is one of the more difficult features connected with this portion of the history of the Israelitish kingdom. As our books give not only the length of time that every king both of Israel and Judah reigned, but also the time when every king of Israel ascended the throne, calculated according to the year of the reign of the contemporaneous king of Judah, and *vice versa*, these accounts unquestionably furnish us with very important help in determining the chronology of the separate data; but this again is rendered difficult and uncertain by the fact, that the sum-total of the years of the several kings is greater, as a rule, than the number of years that they can possibly have reigned according to the synchronistic accounts of the contemporaneous sovereigns in the other kingdom. Chronologists have therefore sought from time immemorial to reconcile the discrepancies by assuming inaccuracies in the accounts, or regencies and interregna. The necessity for such assumptions is indisputable, from the fact that the discrepancies in the numbers of the years are absolutely irreconcilable without them.[1] But if the application of them in the several cases is not to be dependent upon mere caprice, the reconciliation of the sum-totals of the years that the different kings reigned with the differences which we obtain from the chronological data in the synchronistic accounts must be effected upon a fixed and well-founded historical principle, regencies and interregna being only assumed in cases where there are clear indications in the text. Most of the differences can be reconciled by consistently observing and applying the principle pointed out in the Talmud, viz. that the years of the kings are reckoned from Nisan to Nisan, and that with such precision, that even a single day before or after Nisan is reckoned as equal to a year,—a mode of reckoning which is met with even in the New Testament, *e.g.* in the statement that Jesus rose from the dead after three days, or on the third day, and also in the writings of Josephus, so that it is no doubt an early Jewish custom,[2] —for, according to this, it is not necessary to assume a single interregnum in the kingdom of Judah, and only one regency (that of Joram with his father Jehoshaphat), which is clearly indicated in the text (2 Kings viii. 16); and in the kingdom of Israel there is no necessity to assume a single regency, and only two interregna (the first after Jeroboam II., the second between Pekah and Hoshea). — If, for example, we arrange the chronological data of the biblical text upon this principle, we obtain for the period between the division of the kingdom and the Babylonian captivity the following table, which only differs from the statements in the text in two instances,[1] and has a guarantee of its correctness in the fact that it coincides with the well-established chronological data of the universal history of the ancient world.[2]

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[1] This is indirectly admitted even by O. Wolff (in his *Versuch die Widersprüche in den Jahrreihen der Könige Juda's und Israel's und andere Differenzen in der bibl. Chronologie auszugleichen; Theol. Stud. u. Krit.* 1858, p. 625 sqq.), though for the most part he declares himself opposed to such assumptions as arbitrary loopholes, inasmuch as, with his fundamental principle to adhere firmly to the years of the reigns of the kings of Judah as normative, he is only able to effect a reconciliation by shortening at his pleasure the length of the reigns given in the text for the kings of Israel in the period extending from Rehoboam to the death of Ahaziah of Judah, and in the following period by arbitrarily interpolating a thirty-one years' interregnum of the Israelitish kings in the kingdom of Judah between Amaziah and Uzziah.

[2] Compare *Gemara babyl. tract.* ראש השנה, c. i. fol. 3, p. 1, ed. Amstel.: אין מונין להם למלכים אלא מניסן, "*non numerant in regibus nisi a Nisano*" (*i.e. regum annos nonnisi a Nisano numerant*). After quoting certain passages, he says as a proof of this, אמר ר״ חסדא לא שני אלא למלכי ישראל, "*dixit R. Chasda: hoc non docent nisi de regibus Israelitarum.*"—*Ibid.* fol. 2, p. 2: ניסן ראש השנה למלכים ויום אחד בשנה חשוב שנה, "*Nisanus initium anni regibus, ac dies quidem unus in anno (videl. post calendas Nisani) instar anni computatur.*"—*Ibid.*: יום אחד בסוף שנה חשוב שנה, "*unus dies in fine anni pro anno computatur.*" For the examples of the use of this mode of calculation in Josephus, see Wieseler, *chronol. Synopse der vier Evangelien* (Hamb. 1852), p. 52 sqq. They are sufficient of themselves to refute the assertion of Joach. Hartmann, *Systema chronol. bibl.*, Rostoch. 1777, p. 253 sq., that this is a mere invention of the Rabbins and later commentators, even though the biblical writers may not have carried it out to such an extent as to reckon one single day before or after the commencement of Nisan as equal to a whole year, as is evident from 2 Kings xv. 17 and 23.

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[1] Namely, in the fact that the commencement of the reign of Jehoahaz of Israel is placed in the twenty-second year of Joash of Judah, and not in the twenty-third, according to 2 Kings xiii. 1, and that that of Azariah or Uzziah of Judah is placed in the fifteenth year of Jeroboam of Israel, and not the twenty-seventh, according to 2 Kings xv. 1. The reasons for this will be given in connection with the passages themselves.

[2] Not only with the ordinary chronological calculation as to the beginning and end of this entire period, which has been adopted in most text-books of the biblical history, and taken from Usserii *Annales Vet. et Novi Test.*; but also with such data of ancient history as have been astronomically established. For the fourth year of Jehoiakim, with which the captivity or seventy years' servitude of the Jews in Babylon commences, coincides with the twenty-first year of the reign of Nabopolasar, in the fifth year of whose reign an eclipse of the moon, recorded in Almagest, was observed, which eclipse, according to the calculation of Ideler (in the *Abhdll. der Berliner Academie der Wissensch. für histor. Klasse* of the year 1814, pp. 202 and 224), took place on April 22 of the year 621 B.C. Consequently the twenty-first year of Nabopolasar, in which he died, coincides with the year 605 B.C.; and the first conquest of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, which occurred before the death of Nabopolasar, took place in the year 606 B.C.—Compare with this Marc. Niebuhr's *Geschichte Assurs und Babels*, p. 47. Among other things, this scholar observes, at p. 5, note 1, that "the whole of the following investigation has given us no occasion whatever to cherish any doubts as to the correctness of the narratives and numbers in the Old Testament;" and again, at p. 83 sqq., he has demonstrated the agreement of the chronological data of the Old Testament from Azariah or Uzziah to the captivity with the Canon of Ptolemy, and in so doing has only deviated two years from the numbers given in our chronological table, by assigning the battle at Carchemish to the year 143 *æra Nabonas.*, *i.e.* 605 B.C., the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, 144 *ær. Nab.*, or 604 B.C., and the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple to the year 162 *ær. Nab.*, or 586 B.C.,—a difference which arises chiefly from the fact that Niebuhr reckons the years of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar given in the Old Test. from the death of Nabopolasar in the year 605, and assumes that the first year of Nebuchadnezzar corresponded to the year 605 B.C.

Chronological View of the Principal Events from the Division of the Kingdom to the Babylonian Captivity.

Year from the division of the Kingdom.	Kingdom of Judah.	Year of the reign of the Kings of Judah.	Kingdom of Israel.	Year of the reign of the Kings of Israel.	Kingdoms of the World.	Year before the birth of Christ.
1	Rehoboam, reigned 17 years	1	Jeroboam, reigned 22 years	1	Shishak of Egypt, plunders Jerusalem . . .	975 971
18	Abijam, r. 3 y.	—	. . . . . .	18	. . . . . .	957
20	Asa, r. 41 y.	—	. . . . . .	20	. . . . . .	955
22	. . . . .	2	Nadab, r. 2 y.	—	. . . . . .	953
23	. . . . .	3	Baasha, r. 24 y.	—	. . . . . .	952
					Serah the Cushite	940
					Benhadad I. of Syria . . .	939
45	. . . . .	26	Ela, r. 2 y.	—	. . . . . .	930
46	. . . . .	27	Simri, r. 7 days	—	. . . . . .	929
46	. . . . .	27	Tibni & Omri, r. 4 years	—	. . . . . .	929
50	. . . . .	31	Omri alone, r. 8 y.	—	. . . . . .	925
					Ithobal, king of Tyre and Sidon.	
57	. . . . .	38	Ahab, r. 22 y.	—	. . . . . .	918
61	Jehoshaphat, r. 25 years	—	. . . . . .	4	. . . . . .	914
					Benhadad II. in Syria.	
78	. . . . .	17	Ahaziah, r. 2 y.	—	. . . . . .	897
79	. . . . .	18	Joram, r. 12 y.	—	. . . . . .	896
	Joram, regent 2 y.	(23)	. . . . . .	5	. . . . . .	891
86	Jehoshaphat †.					
	Joram r. 6 y. more	—	. . . . . .	(7)	. . . . . .	889
91	Ahaziah, r. 1 y.	—	. . . . . .	12	. . . . . .	884
					Hazael in Syria.	
92	Athaliah, r. 6 y.	—	Jehu, r. 28 y.	—	. . . . . .	883
98	Joash, r. 40 y.	—	. . . . . .	7	. . . . . .	877
119	. . . . .	22?	Jehoahaz, r. 17 y.	—	. . . . . .	856
135	. . . . . .	37	Jehoash, r. 16 y.	—	. . . . . .	840
					Benhadad III. in Syria.	
137	Amaziah, r. 29 y.	—	. . . . . .	2	. . . . . .	838
151	. . . . .	15	Jeroboam II. r. 41 y.	—	. . . . . .	824
165	Uzziah, r. 52 y.	—	. . . . . .	15?	. . . . . .	810
192	. . . . .	(27)	Jeroboam †. Anarchy 11 years	—	. . . . . .	783
203	. . . . .	38	Zechariah, r. 6 months	—	. . . . . .	772
204	. . . . .	39	Shallum, r. 1 mon.	—	. . . . . .	771
204	. . . . .	39	Menahem, r. 10 y.	—	. . . . . .	771
					Pul, king of Assyria.	
215	. . . . .	50	Pekahiah, r. 2 y.	—	. . . . . .	760
216	. . . . .	52	Pekah, r. 20 y.	—	. . . . . .	75

Year from the division of the Kingdom.	Kingdom of Judah.	Year of the reign of the Kings of Judah.	Kingdom of Israel.	Year of the reign Kings of Israel.	Kingdoms of the World.	Year before the birth of Christ.
217	Jotham, r. 16 y.	—	. . . . . .	2	. . . . . .	758
					Building of Rome	753
					Nabonasar . .	747
233	Ahaz, r. 16 y.	—	. . . . . .	17	. . . . . .	742
236	. . . . .	4	Pekah †. Anarchy 8½ months	—	Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria	739
245	. . . . . .	12	Hoshea, r. 9 y.	—	So, king of Egypt	730
248	Hezekiah, r. 29 y.	—	. . . . . .	3	. . . . . .	727
253	. . . . .	6	Destruction of the Kingdom	—	Salmanasar, king of Assyria	722
261	. . . . .	Sennacherib, king of Assyria, besieges Jerusalem				714
		Merodach-Baladan's embassy.				
277	Manasseh, r. 55 y.	. . . .				698
		Esarhaddon sends colonists to Samaria.				
332	Amon, r. 2 y.	. . . .				643
334	Josiah, r. 31 y.	. . . .				641
		Nabopolasar, king of Babylon				626
365	Jehoahaz, r. 3 mon.	Battle at Megiddo with Pharaoh-Necho . . .				610
365	Jehoiakim, r. 11 y.	. . . .				610
369	Beginning of the Captivity	Battle at Carchemish and conquest of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar				606
		Nabopolasar †				605
376	Jehoiachin, r. 3 months	Second conquest of Jerusalem and deportation				599
376	Zedekiah, r. 11 y.	. . . .				599
		Pharaoh-Hophra, king of Egypt.				
387	Destruction of Jerusalem	. . . .				588
	Jehoiachin's elevation	Evil-merodach				562
	End of the Captivity	Cyrus sole ruler				536

1. FROM THE DIVISION OF THE KINGDOM TO THE ASCENT OF THE THRONE BY AHAB IN THE 38TH YEAR OF ASA KING OF JUDAH.

CHAP. XII.–XVI. 28.

This epoch embraces only fifty-seven years, which are filled up in the kingdom of Judah by the reigns of three kings, and in the kingdom of Israel by six rulers from four different houses, Jeroboam's sin of rebellion against the ordinance and commandment of God having produced repeated rebellions, so that one dynasty was ever rising up to overthrow and exterminate another. —Commencing with the secession of the ten tribes from Rehoboam, we have first of all an account of the founding of the kingdom of Israel (ch. xii.), and of the predictions of the prophets concerning the introduction of the calf-worship (ch. xiii.) and the rejection of Jeroboam and his house by God (ch. xiv. 1–20); and after this the most important facts connected with the reigns of Rehoboam, Abijam, and Asa are given (ch. xiv. 21–xv. 24); and, finally, a brief history of the kingdom of Israel from the ascent of the throne by Nadab to the death of Omri (ch. xv. 25–xvi. 28).

CHAP. XII. SECESSION OF THE TEN TRIBES FROM THE HOUSE OF DAVID, AND FOUNDING OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL.

The jealousy which had prevailed from time immemorial between Ephraim and Judah, the two most powerful tribes of the covenant nation, and had broken out on different occasions into open hostilities (Judg. viii. 1 sqq.; 2 Sam. ii. 9, xix. 42 sqq.), issued, on the death of Solomon, in the division of the kingdom; ten tribes, headed by Ephraim, refusing to do homage to Rehoboam, the son and successor of Solomon, and choosing Jeroboam the Ephraimite as their king. Now, although the secession of the ten tribes from the royal house of David had been ordained by God as a punishment for Solomon's idolatry, and not only had Solomon been threatened with this punishment, but the sovereignty over ten tribes had been promised to Jeroboam by the prophet Ahijah, whilst the secession itself was occasioned by Rehoboam's imprudence; yet it was essentially a rebellion against the Lord and His anointed, a conspiracy on the part of these tribes against Judah and its king Rehoboam. For apart from the fact that the tribes had no right to choose at their pleasure a different king from the one who was the lawful heir to the throne of David, the very circumstance that the tribes who were discontented with Solomon's government did not come to Jerusalem to do homage to Rehoboam, but chose Sichem as the place of meeting, and had also sent for Jeroboam out of Egypt, showed clearly enough that it was their intention to sever themselves from the royal house of David; so that the harsh reply given by Rehoboam to their petition that the service imposed upon them might be lightened, furnished them with the desired opportunity for carrying out the secession upon which they had already resolved, and for which Jeroboam was the suitable man. And we have already shown at ch. xi. 40 that the promise of the throne, which Jeroboam had already received from God, neither warranted him in rebelling against Solomon, nor in wresting to himself the government over the tribes that were discontented with the house of David after Solomon's death. The usurpation of the throne was therefore Jeroboam's first sin (vers. 1–24), to which he added a second and much greater one immediately after his ascent of the throne, namely, the establishment of an unlawful worship, by which he turned the political division into a religious schism and a falling away from Jehovah the God-King of His people (vers. 25–33).

Vers. 1–24. SECESSION OF THE TEN TRIBES (cf. 2 Chron. x. 1–xi. 4).—Vers. 1–4. Rehoboam went to Shechem, because all Israel had come thither to make him king. "All Israel," according to what follows (cf. vers. 20 and 21), was the ten tribes beside Judah and Benjamin. The right of making king the prince whom God had chosen, *i.e.* of anointing him and doing homage to him (compare 1 Chron. xii. 38, where הִמְלִיךְ alternates with מָשַׁח לְמֶלֶךְ, 2 Sam. ii. 4, v. 3), was an old traditional right in Israel, and the tribes had exercised it not only in the case of Saul and David (1 Sam. xi. 15; 2 Sam. ii. 4, v. 3), but in that of Solomon also (1 Chron. xxix. 22). The ten tribes of Israel made use of this right on Rehoboam's ascent of the throne; but instead of coming to Jerusalem, the residence of the king and capital of the kingdom, as they ought to have done, and doing homage there to the legitimate successor of Solomon, they had gone to Sichem, the present Nabulus (see at Gen. xii. 6 and xxxiii. 18), the place where the ancient national gatherings were held in the tribe of Ephraim (Josh. xxiv. 1), and where Abimelech the son of Gideon had offered himself as king in the time of the Judges (Judg. ix. 1 sqq.). On the choice of Sichem as the place for doing homage Kimchi has quite correctly observed, that "they sought an opportunity for transferring the government to Jeroboam, and therefore were unwilling to come to Jerusalem, but came to Sichem, which belonged to Ephraim, whilst Jeroboam was an Ephraimite." If there could be any further doubt on the matter, it would be removed by the fact that they had sent for Jeroboam the son of Nebat to come from Egypt, whither he had fled from Solomon (ch. xi. 40), and attend this meeting, and that Jeroboam took the lead in the meeting, and no doubt suggested to those assembled the demand which they should lay before Rehoboam (ver. 4).[1]—The construction of vers. 2 and 3 is a complicated one, since it is only in וַיָּבֹאוּ in ver. 3 that the apodosis occurs to the protasis וַיְהִי כִּשְׁמֹעַ וגו׳, and several circumstantial clauses intervene. "And it came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard, *sc.* that Solomon was dead and Rehoboam had been made king . . . he was still in Egypt, however, whither he had fled from king Solomon; and as Jeroboam was living in Egypt, they had sent and called him . . . that Jeroboam came and the whole congregation of Israel," etc. On the other hand, in 2 Chron. x. 2 the construction is very much simplified, and is rendered clearer by the alteration of וַיֵּשֶׁב יר׳ בְּמִצְרָיִם, "and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt," into וַיָּשָׁב יר׳ מִמִּצְרָיִם, "that Jeroboam returned from Egypt."[2]—Ver. 4. The persons assembled desired that the burdens which Solomon had laid upon them should be lightened, in which case they would serve Rehoboam, *i.e.* would yield obedience to him as their king. הָקֵל מֵעֲבֹדַת אָבִיךָ, "make light away from the service of thy father,"

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[1] "This pretext was no doubt furnished to the people by Jeroboam, who, because he had formerly been placed above Ephraim as superintendent of the works, could most craftily suggest calumnies, from the things which he knew better than others."—(Seb. Schmidt.)

[2] At the same time, neither this explanation in the Chronicles, nor the fact that the Vulgate has the same in our text also, warrants our making alterations in the text, for the simple reason that the deviation in the Chronicles and Vulgate is so obviously nothing but an elucidation of our account, which is more obscurely expressed. There is still less ground for the interpolation, which Thenius has proposed, from the clauses contained in the Septuagint partly after ch. xi. 43, partly in ch. xii. between vers. 24 and 25, and in an abbreviated form once more after ch. xiii. 34, so as to obtain the following more precise account of the course of the rebellion which Jeroboam instigated, and of which we have not a very minute description in ch. xi. 26: "Solomon having appointed Jeroboam superintendent of the tributary labour in Ephraim, for the purpose of keeping in check the Sichemites, who were probably pre-eminently inclined to rebel, directed him to make a fortress, which already existed upon Mount Gerizim under the name of *Millo*, into a strong prison (צְרִירָה), from which the whole district of Gerizim, the table-land, received the name of the land of *Zerirah*, and probably made him governor of it and invested him with great power. When holding this post, Jeroboam rebelled against Solomon, but was obliged to flee. Having now returned from Egypt, he assembled the members of his own tribe, and with them he first of all besieged this prison, for the purpose of making himself lord of the surrounding district.

i.e. reduce what was imposed upon us by thy father. Solomon had undoubtedly demanded greater performances from the people than they had previously been accustomed to, not only to meet the cost of maintaining the splendour of his court, but also and principally to carry out his large and numerous buildings. But in return for this, he had secured for his people not only the blessings of undisturbed peace throughout his whole reign, but also great wealth from the trade and tribute of the subjugated nations, so that there cannot have been any well-grounded occasion for complaint. But when, as is too often the case, men overlooked the advantages and blessings which they owed to his government, and fixed their attention in a one-sided manner merely upon the performances which the king demanded, it might appear as though he had oppressed his people with excessive burdens.

Vers. 5–24. In order that the request of the tribes might be maturely weighed, Rehoboam directed them to appear before him again in three days, and in the meantime discussed the matter with the older counsellors, who had served his father.—Ver. 7. These counsellors said (the singular וַיְדַבֵּר is

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Now this castle was the citadel of the city in which Jeroboam was born, to which he had just returned, and from which they fetched him to take part in the negotiations with Rehoboam. Its ruins are still in existence, according to Robinson (*Pal.* iii. p. 99), and from all that has been said it was not called Zeredah (ch. xi. 26), but (after the castle) Zerira." This is what Thenius says. But if we read the two longer additions of the LXX. quite through, we shall easily see that the words ᾠκοδόμησε τῷ Σαλωμὼν τὴν ἐν ὄρει Ἐφραΐμ do not give any more precise historical information concerning the building of the Millo mentioned in ch. xi. 27, since this verse is repeated immediately afterwards in the following form: οὗτος ᾠκοδόμησε τὴν ἄκραν ἐν ταῖς ἄρσεσιν οἴκου Ἐφραΐμ, οὗτος συνέκλεισε τὴν πόλιν Δαβίδ,—but are nothing more than a legendary supplement made by an Alexandrian, which has no more value than the statement that Jeroboam's mother was named *Sarira* and was γυνὴ πόρνη. The name of the city Σαριρά is simply the Greek form of the Hebrew צְרִרָה, which the LXX. have erroneously adopted in the place of צְרֵדָה as the reading in ch. xi. 26. But in the additional clauses in question in the Alexandrian version, Σαριρά is made into the residence of king Jeroboam and confounded with *Thirza*; what took place at Thirza according to ch. xiv. 17 (of the Hebrew text) being transferred to Sarira, and the following account being introduced, viz. that Jeroboam's wife went ἐκ Σαριρά to the prophet Ahijah to consult him concerning her sick son, and on returning heard of the child's death as she was entering the city of *Sarira*.—These remarks will be quite sufficient to prove that the Alexandrian additions have not the least historical worth.

used, because one of them spoke in the name of the whole), "If thou wilt be subservient to this people to-day (now), and servest them, and hearkenest to them, . . . they will serve thee for ever."—Vers. 8 sqq. But Rehoboam forsook this advice, and asked the younger ministers who had grown up with him. They advised him to overawe the people by harsh threats. "My little finger is stronger than my father's loins." קָטָנִּי, from קֹטֶן, littleness, *i.e.* the little finger (for the form, see Ewald, § 255, *b*),—a figurative expression in the sense of, I possess much greater might than my father. "And now, my father laid a heavy yoke upon you, and I will still further add to your yoke (lay still more upon you): my father chastised you with whips, I will chastise you with scorpions." עַקְרַבִּים, *scorpiones*, are whips with barbed points like the point of a scorpion's sting.[1] This advice was not only imprudent, "considering all the circumstances" (Seb. Schmidt), but it was unwise in itself, and could only accelerate the secession of the discontented. It was the language of a tyrant, and not of a ruler whom God had placed over His people. This is shown in vers. 13, 14: "The king answered the people harshly, and forsook the counsel of the old men," *i.e.* the counsellors who were rich in experience, and spoke according to the counsels of the young men, who flattered his ambition. It is very doubtful, indeed, whether the advice of the old men would have been followed by so favourable a result; it might probably have been so for the moment, but not for a permanency. For the king could not become the עֶבֶד of the people, *serve* the people, without prejudicing the authority entrusted to him by God; though there is no doubt that if he had consented to such condescension, he would have deprived the discontented tribes of all pretext for rebellion, and not have shared in the sin of their secession.—Ver. 15. "And the king hearkened not to the people (to their request for their burdens to be reduced), for it was סִבָּה מֵעִם יְהוָֹה, a turning from the Lord, that He might establish His word" (ch. xi. 31 sqq.), *i.e.* by a divine decree, that Rehoboam contributed to the fulfilment of the counsel of God through his own folly, and brought about the accomplishment of the sentence pronounced upon Solomon.—Ver. 16. The harsh word supplied the discontented with an apparently just occasion for saying, "What portion have we in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse! To thy tents, O Israel! Now see to thy house, David!" *i.e.* take care of thy house. David, the tribe-father, is mentioned in the place of his family. These words, with which Sheba had once preached rebellion in the time of David (2 Sam. xx. 1), give expression to the deep-rooted aversion which was cherished by these tribes towards the Davidic monarchy, and that in so distinct and unvarnished a manner, that we may clearly see that there were deeper causes for the secession than the pretended oppression of Solomon's government; that its real foundation was the ancient jealousy of the tribes, which had been only suppressed for the time by David and Solomon, but had not been entirely eradicated, whilst this jealousy again had its roots in the estrangement of these tribes from the Lord, and from His law and righteousness.—Ver. 17. But the sons of Israel, who dwelt in the cities of Judah, over these Rehoboam became king. These "sons of Israel" are members of the ten tribes who had settled in Judah in the course of ages (cf. ver. 23); and the Simeonites especially are included, since they were obliged to remain in the kingdom of Judah from the very situation of their tribe-territory, and might very well be reckoned among the Israelites who dwelt in the cities of Judah, inasmuch as at first the whole of their territory was allotted to the tribe of Judah, from which they afterwards received a portion (Josh. xix. 1). The verse cannot possibly mean that "the tribe of Judah declared in favour of their countryman Rehoboam as king" (Ewald, *Gesch.* iii. p. 399).—Ver. 18. In order to appease the agitated tribes and commence negotiations with them, Rehoboam sent Adoram, the superintendent of the tribute, to them (see at ch. iv. 6). Rehoboam entrusted him with the negotiation, because the tribes had complained that the tribute burdens were too severe, and the king was no doubt serious in his wish to meet the demands of the people. But the very fact that he sent this man only increased the bitterness of feeling, so that they stoned him to death, and Rehoboam himself was obliged to summon up all his strength (הִתְאַמֵּץ) to escape a similar fate by a speedy flight to his chariot.—Ver. 19. Thus Israel fell away from the house of David "unto this day" (for this formula, see p. 13).—Ver. 20. The secession was completed by the fact that all Israel (of the ten tribes) called Jeroboam to the assembly of the congregation and made him king "over all Israel," so that the tribe of Judah alone adhered to the house of David (see at ch. xi. 32). Ver. 20 commences in the same manner as ver. 2, to indicate that it closes the account commenced in ver. 2.—Vers. 21–24. But after the return of Rehoboam to Jerusalem he was still desirous of bringing back the seceders by force of arms, and raised for that purpose an army of 180,000 men out of all Judah, the tribe of Benjamin, and the rest of the people, *i.e.* the Israelites dwelling in the cities of Judah,—a number which does not appear too large according to 2 Sam. xxiv. 9. But the prophet Shemaiah, a prophet who is not mentioned again, received instructions from God to forbid the king to go to war with their brethren the Israelites, "for this thing was from the Lord." הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה, "this thing, *i.e.* his being deprived of the sovereignty over ten tribes, but not their rebellion" (Seb. Schmidt). For the fact itself, see the remark on ver. 15. The king and the people hearkened to this word. יָשֻׁבוּ לָלֶכֶת, "they turned to go," *i.e.* they gave up the intended expedition and returned home. In 2 Chron. xi. 4 we have the explanatory phrase יָשֻׁבוּ מִלֶּכֶת.

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[1] The Rabbins give this explanation: *virgæ spinis instructæ*. Isidor. Hispal. *Origg.* v. c. 27, explains it in a similar manner: *virga si est nodosa vel aculeata, scorpio vocatur.* The Targ. and Syr., on the other hand, מַרְגְּנִין, ܡܪ̈ܓܢܐ, *i.e.* the Greek *μάραγνα*, a whip. See the various explanations in Bochart, *Hieroz.* iii. p. 554 sq. ed. Ros.

Vers. 25–33. FOUNDING OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL.—Ver. 25. When Jeroboam had become king, it was his first care to give a firmer basis to his sovereignty by the fortification of Sichem and Pnuel. בָּנָה, to build, is used here in the sense of fortifying, because both cities had stood for a long time, and nothing is known of their having been destroyed under either Solomon or David, although the tower of Sichem had been burnt down by Abimelech (Judg. ix. 49), and the tower of Pnuel had been destroyed by Gideon (Judg. viii. 17). *Sichem*, a place well known from the time of Abraham downwards (Gen. xii. 6), was situated upon the mountains of Ephraim, between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal, and still exists under the name of *Nabulus* or *Nablûs*, a name corrupted from *Flavia Neapolis*. Jeroboam dwelt therein, *i.e.* he chose it at first as his residence, though he afterwards resided in Thirza (see ch. xiv. 17). *Pnuel* was situated, according to Gen. xxxii. 31, on the other side of the Jordan, on the northern bank of the Jabbok (not the southern side, as Thenius supposes); and judging from Gen. xxxii. 22 sqq. and Judg. viii. 8 sqq., it was on the caravan road, which led through Gilead to Damascus, and thence past Palmyra and along the Euphrates to Mesopotamia. It was probably on account of its situation that Jeroboam fortified it, to defend his sovereignty over Gilead against hostile attacks from the north-east and east.—Vers. 26 sqq. In order also to give internal strength to his kingdom, Jeroboam resolved to provide for his subjects a substitute for the sacrificial worship in the temple by establishing new *sacra,* and thus to take away all occasion for making festal journeys to Jerusalem, from which he apprehended, and that probably not without reason, a return of the people to the house of David, and consequently further danger for his own life. "If this people go up to perform sacrifice in the house of Jehovah at Jerusalem, their heart will turn to their lord, king Rehoboam," etc.—Ver. 28. He therefore consulted, *sc.* with his counsellors, or the heads of the nation, who had helped him to the throne, and made two calves of gold. עֶגְלֵי זָהָב are young oxen, not of pure gold however, or cast in brass and gilded, but in all probability like the golden calf which Aaron had cast for the people at Sinai, made of a kernel of wood, which was then covered with gold plate (see the Comm. on Ex. xxxii. 4). That Jeroboam had in his mind not merely the Egyptian *Apis*-worship generally, but more especially the image-worship which Aaron introduced for the people at Sinai, is evident from the words borrowed from Ex. xxxii. 4, with which he studiously endeavoured to recommend his new form of worship to the people: "Behold, this is thy God, O Israel, who brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." רַב־לָכֶם מֵעֲלוֹת, it is too much for you to go to Jerusalem; not "let your going suffice," because מִן is not to be taken in a partitive sense here, as it is in Ex. ix. 28 and Ezek. xliv. 6. What Jeroboam meant to say by the words, "Behold thy God," etc., was, "this is no new religion, but this was the form of worship which our fathers used in the desert, with Aaron himself leading the way" (Seb. Schmidt). And whilst the verbal allusion to that event at Sinai plainly shows that this worship was not actual idolatry, *i.e.* was not a worship of Egyptian idols, from which it is constantly distinguished in our books as well as in Hosea and Amos, but that Jehovah was worshipped under the image of the calves or young oxen; the choice of the places in which the golden calves were set up also shows that Jeroboam desired to adhere as closely as possible to ancient traditions. He did not select his own place of residence, but Bethel and Dan. *Bethel*, on the southern border of his kingdom, which properly belonged to the tribe of Benjamin (Josh. xviii. 13 and 22), the present *Beitin*, had already been consecrated as a divine seat by the vision of Jehovah which the patriarch Jacob received there in a dream (Gen. xxviii. 11, 19), and Jacob gave it the name of *Bethel*, house of God, and afterwards built an altar there to the Lord (Gen. xxxv. 7). And Jeroboam may easily have fancied, and have tried to persuade others, that Jehovah would reveal Himself to the descendants of Jacob in this sacred place just as well as He had done to their forefather.—*Dan*, in the northern part of the kingdom, on the one source of the Jordan, formerly called *Laish* (Judg. xviii. 26 sqq.), was also consecrated as a place of worship by the image-worship established there by the Danites, at which even a grandson of Moses had officiated; and regard may also have been had to the convenience of the people, namely, that the tribes living in the north would not have to go a long distance to perform their worship.—Ver. 30. But this institution became a sin to Jeroboam, because it violated the fundamental law of the Old Testament religion, since this not only prohibited all worship of Jehovah under images and symbols (Ex. xx. 4), but had not even left the choice of the place of worship to the people themselves (Deut. xii. 5 sqq.). "And the people went before the one to Dan." The expression "to Dan" can only be suitably explained by connecting it with הָעָם: the people even to Dan, *i.e.* the people throughout the whole kingdom even to Dan. The southern boundary as the *terminus a quo* is not mentioned; not because it was for a long time in dispute, but because it was already given in the allusion to Bethel. הָאֶחָד is neither the golden calf at Dan nor (as I formerly thought) that at Bethel, but is to be interpreted according to the preceding אֶת־הָאֶחָד וְאֶת־הָאֶחָד: one of the two, or actually both the one and the other (Thenius). The sin of which Jeroboam was guilty consisted in the fact that he no longer allowed the people to go to the house of the Lord in Jerusalem, but induced or compelled them to worship Jehovah before one or the other of the calves which he had set up, or (as it is expressed in ver. 31) made a house of high places, בֵּית בָּמוֹת (see at ch. iii. 2), instead of the house of God, which the Lord had sanctified as the place of worship by filling it with His gracious presence. The singular בֵּית ב may be accounted for from the antithesis to בֵּית יְהוָה, upon which it rests. There was no necessity to say expressly that there was a house of high places at Bethel and Dan, *i.e.* in two places, because it followed as a matter of course that the golden calves could not stand in the open air, but were placed in a temple, by which the sacrificial altar stood. These places of worship were houses of *high places, Bamoth,* because the ark of the covenant was wanting, and therewith the gracious presence of God, the *Shechinah,* for which no symbol invented by men could be a substitute. Moreover Jeroboam made "priests from the mass of the people, who were not of the sons of Levi." מִקְצוֹת הָעָם, *i.e.* not of the poorest of the people (Luther and others), but from the last of the people onwards, that is to say, from the whole of the people any one without distinction even to the very last, instead of the priests chosen by God out of the tribe of Levi. For this meaning of מִקְצוֹת see Gen. xix. 4 and Ezek. xxxiii. 2, also Lud. de Dieu on this passage. This innovation on the part of Jeroboam appears very surprising, if we consider how the Ephraimite Micah (Judg. xvii. 10 sqq.) rejoiced that he had obtained a Levite to act as priest for his image-worship, and can only be explained from the fact that the Levites did not consent to act as priests in the worship before the golden calves, but set their faces against it, and therefore, as is stated in 2 Chron. xi. 13, 14, were obliged to leave their district towns and possessions and emigrate into the kingdom of Judah.—Ver. 32. Jeroboam also transferred to the eighth month the feast which ought to have been kept in the seventh month (the feast of tabernacles, Lev. xxiii. 34 sqq.). The pretext for this arbitrary alteration of the law, which repeatedly describes the seventh month as the month appointed by the Lord (Lev. xxiii. 34, 39, and 41), he may have found in the fact that in the northern portion of the kingdom the corn ripened a month later than in the more southern Judah (see my *bibl. Archäol.* ii. § 118, Anm. 3, and § 119, Anm. 2), since this feast of the ingathering of the produce of the threshing-floor and wine-press (Ex. xxiii. 16 ; Lev. xxiii. 39 ; Deut. xvi. 13) was a feast of thanksgiving for the gathering in of all the fruits of the ground. But the true reason was to be found in his intention to make the separation in a religious point of view as complete as possible, although Jeroboam retained the day of the month, the fifteenth, for the sake of the weak who took offence at his innovations. For we may see very clearly that many beside the Levites were very discontented with these illegal institutions, from the notice in 2 Chron. xi. 16, that out of all the tribes those who were devoted to the Lord from the heart went to Jerusalem to sacrifice to the God of the fathers there. "And he sacrificed upon the altar." This clause is connected with the preceding one, in the sense of: he instituted the feast and offered sacrifices thereat. In ver. 32*b* (from כֵּן עָשָׂה onwards) and ver. 33, what has already been related concerning Jeroboam's religious institutions is brought to a close by a comprehensive repetition of the leading points. "Thus did he in Bethel, (namely) to offer sacrifice to the calves; and there he appointed the priests of the high places which he had made, and offered sacrifice upon the altar which he had made at Bethel, on the fifteenth day in the eighth month, which he himself had devised, and so made a feast for the children of Israel and sacrificed upon the altar to burn." מִלְּבַד signifies *scorsum*, by himself alone, *i.e.* in this connection, *i.q.* "from his own heart." The *Keri* מִלִּבּוֹ is therefore a correct explanation as to the fact; but it is a needless correction from Neh. vi. 8. The last clause, וַיַּעַל . . . לְהַקְטִיר, leads on to what follows, and it would be more correct to take it in connection with ch. xiii. 1 and render it thus: and when he was offering sacrifice upon the altar to burn, behold there came a man of God, etc. Thenius has rendered וַיַּעַל incorrectly, and he stood at the altar. This thought would have been expressed by וַיַּעֲמוֹד עַל הַמִּ', as in ch. xiii. 1. By הִקְטִיר we are not to understand the burning or offering of incense, but the burning of the sacrificial portions of the flesh upon the altar, as in Lev. i. 9, 13, 17, etc.

CHAP. XIII. TESTIMONY OF GOD AGAINST THE CALF-WORSHIP OF JEROBOAM.

A prophet out of Judah announces to Jeroboam the eventual overthrow of the idolatrous worship, and attests his divine mission by miraculous signs upon the altar at Bethel and the hardened king (vers. 1–10); but on the way back he allows himself to be enticed by an old prophet out of Bethel to go into his house, contrary to the express command of the Lord, and while sitting at table with him has to hear from his mouth the divine threat, that on account of his transgression of the command of God he will not come into the sepulchre of his fathers. This threat was fulfilled on his way home; and the marvellous fulfilment made so deep an impression upon the old prophet, that he confirmed the testimony which he had given concerning the worship at the high places (vers. 11–32). These marvellous occurrences not only teach how Jeroboam brought about the overthrow of his dynasty by his thorough hardening against the word of God (vers. 33, 34), but they also show how false prophecy rose up from the very beginning in the kingdom of Israel and set itself against the true prophets of the Lord, and how it gained a victory, which merely displayed its own impotence, however, and foreshadowed its eventual and certain overthrow.

Vers. 1–10. *Prophecy against the idolatrous worship at Bethel.*—Vers. 1, 2. Whilst Jeroboam was still occupied in sacrificing by the altar at Bethel, there came a prophet (אִישׁ אֱלֹהִים) out of Judah "in the word of Jehovah" to Bethel, and pronounced upon the altar its eventual destruction. בִּדְבַר יְהוָֹה does not mean "at the word of Jehovah" here, as it frequently does, but "in the word of Jehovah," as vers. 9 and 17 more especially show; so that the word of Jehovah is regarded as a power which comes upon the prophet and drives him to utter the divine revelation which he has received. It is the same in ch. xx. 35. לְהַקְטִיר is to be taken as in ch. xii. 33.—"Behold a son will be born to the house of David, named Josiah; he will offer upon thee (O altar) the priests of the high places, who burn incense (*i.e.* kindle sacrifices) upon thee, and men's bones will they burn upon thee." According to 2 Kings xxiii. 15–20, this prophecy was literally fulfilled. The older theologians found in this an evident proof of the divine inspiration of the prophets; modern theology, on the other hand, which denies the supernatural inspiration of prophecy in accordance with its rationalistic or naturalistic principles, supposes that this prophecy was not more precisely defined till after the event, and adduces in support of this the apparently just argument, that the prediction of particular historical events is without analogy, and generally that the introduction either of particular persons by name or of definite numbers is opposed to the very essence of prophecy, and turns prediction into soothsaying. The distinction between soothsaying and prediction, however, is not that the latter merely utters general ideas concerning the future, whilst the former announces special occurrences beforehand: but soothsaying is the foretelling of all kinds of accidental things; prophecy, on the contrary, the foretelling of the progressive development of the kingdom of God, not merely in general, but in its several details, according to the circumstances and necessities of each particular age, and that in such a manner that the several concrete details of the prophecy rest upon the general idea of the revelation of salvation, and are thereby entirely removed from the sphere of the accidental. It is true that perfectly concrete predictions of particular events, with the introduction of names and statement of times, are much more rare than the predictions of the progressive development of the kingdom of God according to its general features; but they are not altogether wanting, and we meet with them in every case where it was of importance to set before an ungodly generation in the most impressive manner the truth of the divine threatenings or promises. The allusion to *Coresh* in Isa. xliv. 28, xlv. 1, is analogous to the announcement before us. But in both cases the names are closely connected with the destination of the persons in the prophecy, and are simply a concrete description of what God will accomplish through these men. Hence the name יֹאשִׁיָּהוּ occurs primarily according to its appellative meaning alone, viz. "he whom Jehovah supports," from אָשָׁה, to support, and expresses this thought: there will be born a son to the house of David, whom Jehovah will support or establish, so that he shall execute judgment upon the priests of the high places at Bethel. This prophecy was then afterwards so fulfilled by the special arrangement of God, that the king who executed this judgment bore the name of *Joshiyahu* as his proper name. And so also כּוֹרֶשׁ was originally an appellative in the sense of sun. The judgment which the prophet pronounced upon the altar was founded upon the *jus talionis*. On the very same altar on which the priests offer sacrifice to the עֲגָלִים shall they themselves be offered, and the altar shall be defiled for ever by the burning of men's bones upon it. עַצְמוֹת אָדָם, "men's bones," does not stand for "their (the priests') bones," but is simply an epithet used to designate human corpses, which defile the place where they lie (2 Kings xxiii. 16).—Ver. 3. In confirmation of his word the prophet added a miracle (מוֹפֵת, τέρας, *portentum*, see at Ex. iv. 21): "this is the sign that the Lord hath spoken (through me): behold the altar will be rent in pieces, and the ashes upon it will be poured out." דֶּשֶׁן is the ashes of the fat of the sacrificial animals. The pouring out of the sacrificial ashes in consequence of the breaking up of the altar was a penal sign, which indicated, along with the destruction of the altar, the desecration of the sacrificial service performed upon it.—Ver. 4. The king, enraged at this announcement, stretched out his hand against the prophet with the words, "seize him"—and his hand dried up, so that he was not able to draw it back again. יָבֵשׁ, to dry up, *i.e.* to become rigid in consequence of a miraculous withdrawal of the vital energy. Thus Jeroboam experienced in the limbs of his own body the severity of the threatened judgment of God.—Vers. 5, 6. The penal miracle announced in the word of Jehovah, *i.e.* in the strength of the Lord, also took effect immediately upon the altar; and the defiant king was now obliged to entreat the man of God, saying, "Soften, I pray, the face of the Lord thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may return to me," *i.e.* that I may be able to draw it back again, to move it once more. And this also took place at once at the intercession of the prophet. חִלָּה אֶת־פְּנֵי יי׳, lit. to stroke the face of God, *i.e.* to render it soft by intercession (see at Ex. xxxii. 11).—Ver. 7. As Jeroboam could do nothing by force against the prophet, he endeavoured to gain him over to his side by friendliness, that at least he might render his threat harmless in the eyes of the people. For this purpose, and not to do him honour or to make him some acknowledgment for the restoration of his hand, he invited him to his house, to strengthen himself with food (סְעַד as in Gen. xviii. 5, Judg. ix. 5; for the form סְעָדָה, see Ewald, § 41, *c*) and receive from him a present.—Vers. 8 sqq. But this design was also frustrated, and the rejection of his worship on the part of God was still more strongly declared. "If thou gavest me," the man of God replied, "the half of thy house, I shall not go in with thee, nor eat bread and drink water in this place; for thus hath Jehovah commanded me," etc. The subject, *Jehovah*, is easily supplied to צִוָּה from the context (*vid.* Ewald, § 294, *b*). God had forbidden the prophet to eat and drink "to manifest His detestation of idolatry, and to show by that fact that the Bethelites were so detestable, and as it were excommunicated by God, that He wished none of the faithful to join with them in eating and drinking" (C. a Lap.). He was not to return by the way by which he came, that no one might look out for him, and force him to a delay which was irreconcilable with his commission, or "lest by chance being brought back by Jeroboam, he should do anything to please him which was unworthy of a prophet, or from which it might be inferred that idolaters might hope for some favour from the Deity" (Budd.).

Vers. 11–32. *Seduction of the man of God by an old prophet, and his consequent punishment.*—Vers. 11–19. The man of God had resisted the invitations of Jeroboam, and set out by a different road to return to Judah. An old prophet at Bethel heard from his sons what had taken place (the singular יָבוֹא בְנוֹ as compared with the plural וַיְסַפְּרוּם may be explained on the supposition that first of all one son related the matter to his father, and that then the other sons supported the account given by the first); had his ass saddled; hurried after him, and found him sitting under *the* terebinth (the tree well known from that event); invited him to come into his house and eat with him; and when the latter appealed to the divine prohibition, said to him (ver. 18), "I am a prophet also as thou art, and an angel has said to me in the word of the Lord: Bring him back with thee into thy house, that he may eat and drink," and lied to him (כִּחֵשׁ לוֹ without a *copula,* because it is inserted as it were parenthetically, simply as an explanation)—then he went back with him, and ate and drank in his house.—Vers. 20–22. As they were sitting at table the word of the Lord came to the old prophet, so that he cried out to the man of God from Judah: "Because thou hast been rebellious against the command of the Lord, and hast not kept the commandment, . . . thou wilt not come to the grave of thy fathers," *i.e.* thou wilt meet with a violent death by the way. This utterance was soon fulfilled.—Vers. 23 sqq. After he had eaten he saddled the ass for him, *i.e.* for the prophet whom he had fetched back, and the latter (the prophet from Judah) departed upon it. On the road a lion met him and slew him; "and his corpse was cast in the road, but the ass stood by it, and the lion stood by the corpse." The lion, contrary to its nature, had neither consumed the prophet whom it had slain, nor torn in pieces and devoured the ass upon which he rode, but had remained standing by the corpse and by the ass, that the slaying of the prophet might not be regarded as a misfortune that had befallen him by accident, but that the hand of the Lord might be manifest therein, so that passers-by saw this marvel and related it in Bethel.—Ver. 26. When the old prophet at Bethel heard of this, he said, "It is the man of God, who was disobedient to the word of the Lord; the Lord hath delivered him to the lion, so that it hath torn him (שָׁבַר, *frangere, confringere,* used of a lion which tears its prey in pieces) and slain him according to the word of the Lord, which He spake to him."—Vers. 27–32. He thereupon had his ass saddled, and went and found the corpse and the ass standing by it, without the lion having eaten the corpse or torn the ass in pieces; and he lifted the corpse upon his ass, and brought it into his own city, and laid the corpse in his grave with the customary lamentation: הוֹי אָחִי, alas, my brother! (cf. Jer. xxii. 18), and then gave this command to his sons: "When I die, bury me in the grave in which the man of God is buried, let my bones rest beside his bones; for the word which he proclaimed in the word of Jehovah upon the altar at Bethel and upon all the houses of the high places in the cities of Samaria will take place" (*i.e.* will be fulfilled). The expression "cities of Samaria" belongs to the author of these books, and is used proleptically of the kingdom of the ten tribes, which did not receive this name till after the building of the city of Samaria as the capital of the kingdom and the residence of the kings of Israel (ch. xvi. 24). There is a prophetic element in the words "upon all the houses of the high places," etc., inasmuch as the only other erection at that time beside the one at Bethel was a temple of the high places at Dan. But after such a beginning the multiplication of them might be foreseen with certainty, even without any higher illumination.

The conduct of the old prophet at Bethel appears so strange, that Josephus and the Chald., and most of the Rabbins and of the earlier commentators both Catholic and Protestant, have regarded him as a false prophet, who tried to lay a trap for the prophet from Judah, in order to counteract the effect of his prophecy upon the king and the people. But this assumption cannot be reconciled with either the divine revelation which came to him at the table, announcing to the Judæan prophet the punishment of his transgression of the commandment of God, and was so speedily fulfilled (vers. 20–24); or with the honour which he paid to the dead man after this punishment had fallen upon him, by burying him in his own grave; and still less with his confirmation of his declaration concerning the altar at Bethel (vers. 29-32). We must therefore follow Ephr. Syr., Theodor., Hengstenberg, and others, and regard the old prophet as a true prophet, who with good intentions, and not "under the influence of human envy" (Thenius), but impelled by the desire to enter into a closer relation to the man of God from Judah and to strengthen himself through his prophetic gifts, urged him to enter his house. The fact that he made use of sinful means in order to make more sure of securing the end desired, namely, of the false pretence that he had been directed by an angel to do this, may be explained, as Hengstenberg suggests (*Dissert.* vol. ii. p. 149), on the ground that when Jeroboam introduced his innovations, he had sinned by keeping silence, and that the appearance of the Judæan prophet had brought him to a consciousness of this sin, so that he had been seized with shame on account of his fall, and was anxious to restore himself to honour in his own eyes and those of others by intercourse with this witness to the truth. But however little the lie itself can be excused or justified, we must not attribute to him alone the consequences by which the lie was followed in the case of the Judæan prophet. For whilst he chose reprehensible means of accomplishing what appeared to be a good end, namely, to raise himself again by intercourse with a true prophet, and had no wish to injure the other in any way, the Judæan prophet allowed himself to be seduced to a transgression of the clear and definite prohibition of God simply by the sensual desire for bodily invigoration by meat and drink, and had failed to consider that the divine revelation which he had received could not be repealed by a pretended revelation from an angel, because the word of God does not contradict itself. He was therefore obliged to listen to a true revelation from God from the mouth of the man whose pretended revelation from an angel he had too carelessly believed, namely, to the announcement of punishment for his disobedience towards the commandment of God, which punishment he immediately afterwards endured, "for the destruction of the flesh, but for the preservation of the spirit: 1 Cor. xv. 5" (*Berleb. Bible*). That the punishment fell upon him alone and not upon the old prophet of Bethel also, and that for apparently a smaller crime, may be accounted for "not so much from the fact that the old prophet had lied with a good intention (this might hold good of the other also), as from the fact that it was needful to deal strictly with the man who had just received a great and holy commission from the Lord" (O. v. Gerlach). It is true that no bodily punishment fell upon the old prophet, but this punishment he received instead, that with his lie he was put to shame, and that his conscience must have accused him of having occasioned the death of the man of God from Judah. He was thereby to be cured of his weakness, that he might give honour to the truth of the testimony of God. "Thus did the wondrous providence of God know how to direct all things most gloriously, so that the bodily destruction of the one contributed to the spiritual and eternal preservation of the soul of the other" (*Berleb. Bible*).—Concerning the design of these marvellous events, H. Witsius has the following remarks in his *Miscell. ss.* i. p. 118 (ed. nov. 1736): "So many wondrous events all concurring in one result caused the prophecy against the altar at Bethel to be preserved in the mouths and memories of all, and the mission of this prophet to become far more illustrious. Thus, although the falsehood of the old man of Bethel brought disgrace upon himself, it injured no one but the man of God whose credulity was too great; and, under the overruling providence of God, it contributed in the most signal manner to the confirmation and publication of the truth."[1] The heaping up of the marvellous corresponded to the great object of the mission of the man of God out of Judah, through which the Lord would enter an energetic protest against the idolatrous worship of Jeroboam at its first introduction, to guard those who feared God in Israel, of whom there were not a few (2 Chron. xi. 16; 2 Kings xviii. 3, xix. 18), from falling away from Him by joining in the worship of the calves, and to take away every excuse from the ungodly who participated therein.

Vers. 33 and 34. But this did not lead Jeroboam to conversion. He turned not from his evil way, but continued to make high priests from the mass of the people. וַיָּשָׁב וַיַּעַשׂ, "he returned and made," *i.e.* he made again or continued to make. For the fact itself compare ch. xii. 31. "Whoever had pleasure (הֶחָפֵץ, cf. Ges. § 109), he filled his hand, that he might become a priest of the high places." מִלֵּא אֶת־יָדוֹ, to fill the hand, is the technical expression for investing with the priesthood, according to the rite prescribed for the consecration of the priests, namely, to place sacrificial gifts in the hands of the persons to be consecrated (see at Lev. vii. 37 and viii. 25 sqq.). The plural כֹּהֲנֵי בָמוֹת is used with indefinite generality: that he might be ranked among the priests of high places.—Ver. 34. "And it became in (with) this thing the sin of the house of Jeroboam, and the destroying and cutting off from the earth;" that is to say, this obstinate persistence in ungodly conduct was the guilt which had as its natural consequence the destroying of his house from the face of the earth. בַּדָּבָר הַזֶּה is not a mistake for הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה, but בְּ is used, as in 1 Chron. ix. 33, vii. 23, to express the idea of being and persisting in a thing (for this use of בְּ compare Ewald, § 295, *f*).

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[1] Compare with this the remark of Theodoret in his *quæst.* 43 *in* 3 *libr. Reg.*: "In my opinion this punishment served to confirm the declaration concerning the altar. For it was not possible for the statement of such a man to be concealed: and this was sufficient to fill with terror those who heard it; for if partaking of food contrary to the command of God, and that not of his own accord, but under a deception, brought such retribution upon a righteous man, to what punishments would they be exposed who had forsaken the God who made them, and worshipped the likenesses of irrational creatures?"

CHAP. XIV. REIGN AND DEATH OF JEROBOAM AND REHOBOAM.

Vers. 1–20. REIGN OF JEROBOAM.—Vers. 1–18. *Ahijah's prophecy against Jeroboam and the kingdom of Israel.*—As Jeroboam did not desist from his idolatry notwithstanding the threatened punishment, the Lord visited him with the illness of his son, and directed the prophet Ahijah, to whom his wife had gone to ask counsel concerning the result of the illness, to predict to him not only the cutting off of his house and the death of his sick son, but also the thrusting away of Israel out of the land of its fathers beyond the Euphrates, and in confirmation of this threat caused the sick son to die when the returning mother crossed the threshold of her house again.—Vers. 1–3. When his son fell sick, Jeroboam said to his wife: Disguise thyself, that thou mayest not be known as the wife of Jeroboam, and go to Shiloh to the prophet Ahijah, who told me that I should be king over this people; he will tell thee how it will fare with the boy. הִשְׁתַּנָּה, from שָׁנָה, to alter one's self, *i.e.* to disguise one's self. She was to go to Shiloh disguised, so as not to be recognised, to deceive the old prophet, because otherwise Jeroboam did not promise himself any favourable answer, as he had contemptuously neglected Ahijah's admonition (ch. xi. 38, 39). But he turned to this prophet because he had spoken concerning him לְמֶלֶךְ, to be king, *i.e.* that he would become king, over this people. לְמֶלֶךְ stands for לִהְיוֹת מֶלֶךְ, with which the infinitive *esse* can be omitted (*vid.* Ewald, § 336, *b*). As this prophecy, which was so favourable to Jeroboam, had come to pass (ch. xi. 29, 30), he hoped that he might also obtain from Ahijah a divine revelation concerning the result of his son's illness, provided that he did not know who it was who came to seek counsel concerning her sick son. To complete the deception, she was to take with her as a present for the prophet (cf. 1 Sam. ix. 8) "ten loaves and crumbs" and a jar with honey, *i.e.* a trifling gift such as a simple citizen's wife might take. According to the early versions and the context, a kind of plain cake, *κολλυρίδα* (LXX.), *crustulam* (Vulg.). It is different in Josh. ix. 5.—Vers. 4, 5. Ahijah could no longer see, because his eyes were blinded with age. קָמוּ עֵינָיו as in 1 Sam. iv. 15, an expression applied to the black cataract, *amaurosis.* It was therefore all the less possible for him to recognise in a natural manner the woman who was coming to him. But before her arrival the Lord had not only revealed to him her coming and her object, but had also told him what he was to say to her if she should disguise herself when she came. כֹּה וְכָזֶה; see at Judg. xviii. 4. וִיהִי כְבֹאָהּ וגו׳, "let it be if she comes and disguises herself;" *i.e.* if when she comes she should disguise herself.—Ver. 6. When Ahijah heard the sound of her feet entering the door (the participle בָּאָה, according to the number and gender, refers to the אִשָּׁה implied in רַגְלֶיהָ, *vid.* Ewald, § 317, *c*), he addressed her by her name, charged her with her disguise of herself, and told her that he was entrusted with a hard saying to her. קָשָׁה (cf. ch. xii. 13) is equivalent to חָזוּת קָשָׁה; for the construction, compare Ewald, § 284, *c.*—Vers. 7 sqq. The saying was as follows: "Therefore, because thou hast exalted thyself from the people, and I have made thee prince over my people Israel (cf. ch. xi. 31), . . . but thou hast not been as my servant David, who kept my commandments . . . (cf. ch. xi. 34), and hast done worse than all who were before thee (*judices nimirum et duces Israelis*—Cler.), and hast gone and hast made thyself other gods (contrary to the express command in Ex. xx. 2, 3), . . . and hast cast me behind thy back: therefore I bring misfortune upon the house of Jeroboam," etc. The expression, to cast God behind the back, which only occurs here and in Ezek. xxiii. 35, denotes the most scornful contempt of God, the strict opposite of "keeping God before the eyes and in the heart." מַשְׁתִּין בְּקִיר, every male person; see at 1 Sam. xxv. 22. A synonymous expression is עָצוּר וְעָזוּב, the fettered (*i.e.* probably the married) and the free (or single); see at Deut. xxxii. 36. "In Israel," *i.e.* in the kingdom of the ten tribes. The threat is strengthened by the clause in ver. 10, "and I will sweep out after the house of Jeroboam, as one sweepeth out dung, even to the end," which expresses shameful and utter extermination; and this threat is still further strengthened in ver. 11 by the threat added from Deut. xxviii. 26, that of those cut off not one is to come to the grave, but their bodies are to be devoured by the dogs and birds of prey,—the worst disgrace that could befall the dead. Instead of wild beasts (Deut. xxviii. 26) the dogs are mentioned here, because in the East they wander out in the streets without owners, and are so wild and ravenous that they even devour corpses (*vid.* Harmar, *Beobachtungen,* i. p. 198). לְיָרָבְעָם with לְ of relationship, equivalent to of those related to Jeroboam. It is the same in ver. 13.—Vers. 12, 13. After this announcement of the judgment upon the house of Jeroboam, Ahijah gave the wife information concerning her sick son. He would die as soon as she entered the city, and of all the male members of the house of Jeroboam he only would receive the honour of a proper burial, because in him there was some good thing towards Jehovah found. Ewald (§ 247, *b*) regards the form בְּבֹאָה as standing for בְּבֹאָהּ, and refers the suffix to the following word הָעִיר (*vid.* Ewald, § 309, *c*). But as this use of the suffix would be very harsh, the question arises whether בֹּאָה is not to be regarded as a feminine form of the infinitive, after the analogy of דֵּעָה in Ex. ii. 4 and לֵדָה in 2 Kings xix. 3, etc. From the fulfilment of this declaration in vers. 17 and 18 Jeroboam was to learn that the threatened destruction of his royal house would also be just as certainly fulfilled. The sick son appears to have been the heir-presumptive to the throne. This may be inferred partly from the lamentation of all Israel at his death (ver. 18), and partly from what follows here in the next verse. אֶל־יְהוָה means in his relation to Jehovah.—Ver. 14. "Jehovah will raise Himself up a king over Israel, who will cut off the house of Jeroboam this day; but what (*sc.* do I say)? even now," *sc.* has He raised him up. This appears to be the simplest explanation of the last words of the verse, of which very various interpretations have been given. זֶה is placed before הַיּוֹם, to give it the stronger emphasis, as in Ex. xxxii. 1 (compare Josh. ix. 12, 13, and Ewald, § 293, *b*; and for גַּם עַתָּה compare Delitzsch on *Job*, i. p. 290, transl.).—Vers. 15, 16. But in order that not only Jeroboam, but also the people who had joined in his idolatry, might perceive the severity of the divine judgment, Ahijah also announced to the nation its banishment into exile beyond the Euphrates. "Jehovah will smite Israel, as the reed shakes in the water," is an abbreviated phrase for: Jehovah will smite Israel in such a manner that it will sway to and fro like a reed in the water moved by a strong wind, which has not a sufficiently firm hold to resist the violence of the storm. "And will thrust them out of the good land," etc., as Moses threatened the transgressors of the law (Deut. xxix. 27), "and scatter them beyond the river (Euphrates)," *i.e.* banish them among the heathen, from whom God brought out and chose their forefather (Josh. xxiv. 3), "because they have made themselves Ashera-idols, to provoke Jehovah." אֲשֵׁרִים is used for idols generally, among which the golden calves are reckoned. וְיִתֵּן, that He may deliver up Israel, on account of the idolatrous forms of worship introduced by Jeroboam. For the fulfilment see 2 Kings xv. 29, xvii. 23, and xviii. 11.—In vers. 17 and 18 the exact fulfilment of Ahijah's announcement concerning the death of Jeroboam's sick son is described. According to ver. 17, Jeroboam was then residing at *Thirza*, whereas he had at first resided at Shechem (ch. xii. 25). *Thirza* is probably the present *Talluza*, on the north of Shechem (see at Josh. xii. 24).—Vers. 19 and 20. *End of Jeroboam's reign.* Of the wars, which were described in the annals of the kings (see p. 12), the war with Abijam of Judah is the only one of which we have any account (2 Chron. xiii. 2 sqq.). See also the Comm. on ver. 30. He was followed on the throne by his son Nadab.

Vers. 21–31. REIGN OF REHOBOAM IN JUDAH (compare 2 Chron. xi. 5–xii. 16).—Ver. 21. Rehoboam, who ascended the throne at the age of forty-one, was born a year before the accession of Solomon (see at ch. ii. 24). 'In the description of Jerusalem as the city chosen by the Lord (cf. ch. xi. 36) there is implied not so much an indirect condemnation of the falling away of the ten tribes, as the striking contrast to the idolatry of Rehoboam referred to in vers. 23 sqq. The name of his mother is mentioned (here and in ver. 31), not because she seduced the king to idolatry (Ephr. Syr.), but generally on account of the great influence which the queen-mother appears to have had both upon the king personally and upon his government, as we may infer from the fact that the mother's name is given in the case of every king of Judah (*vid.* ch. xv. 2, 13, xxii. 42, etc.).—Vers. 22–24. The general characteristics of Rehoboam's reign are supplied and more minutely defined in the account in the Chronicles. According to 2 Chron. xi. 5–xii. 1, he appears to have been brought to reflection by the announcement of the prophet, that the falling away of the ten tribes had come from the Lord as a punishment for Solomon's idolatry (ch. xii. 23, 24; 2 Chron. xi. 2–4); and in the first years of his reign to have followed the law of God with earnestness, and to have been occupied in the establishment of his government partly by the fortification of different cities (2 Chron. xi. 5–12), and partly by setting in order his domestic affairs, placing his numerous sons, who were born of his many wives and concubines, in the fortified cities of the land, and thus providing for them, and naming Abijam as his successor (2 Chron. xi. 18–22); while his kingdom was still further strengthened by the priests, Levites, and pious Israelites who emigrated to Judah and Jerusalem from the ten tribes (2 Chron. xi. 13–17). But this good beginning only lasted three years (2 Chron. xi. 17). When he thought that he had sufficiently fortified his kingdom, he forsook the law of the Lord, and all Israel (*i.e.* all the covenant nation) with him (2 Chron. xii. 1). "Judah did that which was displeasing in the sight of the Lord; they provoked Him to jealousy more than all that their fathers (*sc.* under the Judges) had done with their sins." קִנֵּא, to provoke to jealousy (Num. v. 14), is to be explained, when it refers to God, from the fact that the relation in which God stood to His people was regarded under the figure of a marriage, in which Jehovah appears as the husband of the nation, who is angry at the unfaithfulness of his wife, *i.e.* at the idolatry of the nation. Compare the remarks on אֵל קַנָּא in the Comm. on Ex. xx. 5.—Ver. 23. They also (the Judæans as well as the Israelites) built themselves *bamoth*, altars of high places (see at ch. iii. 3), monuments and Ashera-idols. מַצֵּבוֹת are not actual images of gods, but stones set up as memorials (Gen. xxxi. 13, xxxv. 20; Ex. xxiv. 4), more especially stone monuments set up in commemoration of a divine revelation (Gen. xxviii. 18, 22, xxxv. 14). Like the *bamoth*, in connection with which they generally occur, they were originally dedicated to Jehovah; but even under the law they were forbidden, partly as places of divine worship of human invention which easily degenerated into idolatry, but chiefly because the Canaanites had erected such monuments to Baal by the side of his altars (Ex. xxiii. 24, xxxiv. 13; Deut. vii. 5, etc.), whereby the worship of Jehovah was unconsciously identified with the worship of Baal, even when the *mazzeboth* were not at first erected to the Canaanitish Baal. As the מַצֵּבוֹת of the Canaanites were dedicated to Baal, so were the אֲשֵׁרִים to Astarte, the female nature-deity of those tribes. אֲשֵׁרָה, however, does not mean a *grove* (see the Comm. on Deut. xvi. 21), but an idol of the Canaanitish nature-goddess, generally most likely a lofty wooden pillar, though sometimes perhaps a straight trunk of a tree, the branches and crown of which were lopped off, and which was planted upon heights and in other places by the side of the altars of Baal. The name אֲשֵׁרָה was transferred from the idol to the goddess of nature (ch. xv. 13, xviii. 19; 2 Kings xxi. 7, etc.), and was used of the image or column of the Phœnician Astarte (ch. xvi. 33; 2 Kings xiii. 6, xvii. 16, etc.), just as אֲשֵׁרוֹת in Judg. iii. 7 alternates with עַשְׁתָּרוֹת in Judg. ii. 13. These idols the Israelites (? Judæans—Tr.) appear to have also associated with the worship of Jehovah; for the external worship of Jehovah was still maintained in the temple, and was performed by Rehoboam himself with princely pomp (ver. 28). "On every high hill," etc.; see at Deut. xii. 2. —Ver. 24. "There were also prostitutes in the land." קָדֵשׁ is used collectively as a generic name, including both male and female hierodylæ, and is exchanged for the plural in ch. xv. 12. The male קְדֵשִׁים had emasculated themselves in religious frenzy in honour of the Canaanitish goddess of nature, and were called Galli by the Romans. They were Canaanites, who had found their way into the land of Judah when idolatry gained the upper hand (as indicated by וְגַם). "They appear here as strangers among the Israelites, and are those notorious Cinædi more especially of the imperial age of Rome who travelled about in all directions, begging for the Syrian goddess, and even in the time of Augustine went about asking for alms in the streets of Carthage as a remnant of the Phœnician worship (*de civ. Dei*, vii. 26)."—Movers, p. 679. On the female קְדֵשׁוֹת see the Comm. on Gen. xxxviii. 21 and Deut. xxiii. 18.

This sinking into heathen abominations was soon followed by the punishment, that Judah was given up to the power of the heathen.—Vers. 25–28. King *Shishak* of Egypt invaded the land with a powerful army, conquered all the fortified cities, penetrated to Jerusalem, and would probably have put an end to the kingdom of Judah, if God had not had compassion upon him, and saved him from destruction, in consequence of the humiliation of the king and of the chiefs of the nation, caused by the admonition of the prophet Shemaiah, so that after the conquest of Jerusalem Shishak contented himself with withdrawing, taking with him the treasures of the temple and of the royal palace. Compare the fuller account of this expedition in 2 Chron. xii. 2–9. *Shishak* (שִׁישַׁק) was the first king of the twenty-second (or Bubastitic) dynasty, called *Sesonchis* in Jul. Afric., *Sesonchosis* in Eusebius, and upon the monuments on which Champollion first deciphered his name, *Sheshonk* or *Sheshenk*. Shishak has celebrated his expedition against Judah by a bas-relief on the outer wall of the pillar-hall erected by him in the first palace at Karnak, in which more than 130 figures are led in cords by *Ammon* and the goddess *Muth* with their hands bound upon their backs. The lower portion of the figures of this long row of prisoners is covered by escutcheons, the border of which being provided with battlements, shows that the prisoners are symbols of conquered cities. About a hundred of these escutcheons are still legible, and in the names upon them a large number of the names of cities in the kingdom of Judah have been deciphered with tolerable certainty.[1] Shishak was probably bent chiefly upon the conquest and plundering of the cities. But from Jerusalem, beside other treasures of the temple and palace, he also carried off the golden shields that had been made by Solomon (ch. x. 16), in the place of which Rehoboam had copper ones made for his body-guard. The guard, רָצִים, runners, are still further described as הַשֹּׁמְרִים פֶּתַח בֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ, "who kept the door of the king's house," *i.e.* supplied the sentinels for the gate of the royal palace.—Ver. 28. Whenever the king went into the house of Jehovah, the runners carried these shields; from which we may see that the king was accustomed to go to the temple with solemn pomp. These shields were not kept in the state-house of the forest of Lebanon (ch. x. 17) as the golden shields were, but in the guard-chamber (תָּא; see at Ezek. xl. 7) of the runners.—Vers. 29–31. Further particulars are given in 2 Chron. xi. and xii. concerning the rest of the acts of Rehoboam. "There was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam the whole time (of their reign)." As nothing is said about any open war between them, and the prophet Shemaiah prohibited the attack which Rehoboam was about to make upon the tribes who had fallen away (ch. xi. 23 sqq.), מִלְחָמָה can only denote the hostile feelings and attitude of the two rulers towards one another.—Ver. 31. *Death and burial of Rehoboam:* as in the case of Solomon (ch. xi. 43). The name of the queen-mother has already been given in ver. 21, and the repetition of it here may be explained on the supposition that in the original sources employed by the author of our books it stood in this position. The son and successor of Rehoboam upon the throne is called *Abijam* (אֲבִיָּם) in the account before us; whereas in the Chronicles he is always called *Abijah* (אֲבִיָּה, 2 Chron. xii. 16, xiii. 1, etc., or אֲבִיָּהוּ, 2 Chron. xiii. 21). אֲבִיָּם, *i.e.* father of the sea, is unquestionably the older form of the name, which was reduced to אֲבִיָּה,

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[1] Compare Max Duncker, *Gesch. des Alterthums*, Bd. i. p. 909, ed. 3, and for the different copies of this bas-relief in the more recent works upon Egypt, Ruetschi in Herzog's *Cycl.* (art. *Rehoboam*). The latest attempts at deciphering are those by Brugsch, *Geogr. Inschriften in den ägypt. Denkmälern*, ii. p. 56 sqq., and O. Blau, *Sisaqs Zug gegen Juda aus dem Denkmale bei Karnak erläutert*, in the *Deutsch. morgenl. Ztschr.* xv. p. 233 sqq. Champollion's interpretation of one of these escutcheons, in his *Précis du système hierogl.* p. 204, viz. *Juda hammalek*, "the king of Judah," has been rejected by Lepsius and Brugsch as philologically inadmissible. Brugsch writes the name thus: *Judh malk* or *Joud-hamalok*, and identifies *Judh* with *Jehudijeh*, which Robinson (*Pal.* iii. p. 45) supposes to be the ancient Jehud (Josh. xix. 45).

This *Jehud* in the tribe of Dan, Blau (p. 238) therefore also finds in the name; and it will not mislead any one that this city is reckoned as belonging to the tribe of Dan, since in the very same chapter (Josh. xix. 42) Ajalon is assigned to Dan, though it was nevertheless a fortress of Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 10). But Blau has not given any explanation of the addition *malk* or *malok*, whereas Gust. Roesch takes it to be מֶלֶךְ, and supposes it to mean "Jehud of the king, namely, of Rehoboam or of Judah, on account of its being situated in Dan, which belonged to the northern kingdom." But this is certainly incorrect. For where could the Egyptians have obtained this exact knowledge of the relation in which the tribes of the nation of Israel stood to one another?

and then identified with the formation from אֲבִי and יָה = יְהוּ (from יְהוָֹה).

CHAP. XV. 1–24. REIGNS OF THE TWO KINGS ABIJAM AND ASA OF JUDAH.

Vers. 1–8. Reign of Abijam (cf. 2 Chron. xiii.).—*Abijam* reigned three years, and his mother's name was *Maacah*, daughter (*i.e.* grand-daughter) of Absalom. We have the same in 2 Chron. xi. 20, 21; but in 2 Chron. xiii. 2 she is called *Michajahu*, daughter of Uriel of Gibeah. If אֲבִישָׁלוֹם was without doubt Absalom, the well-known son of David, as we may infer from the fact that this name does not occur again in the Old Testament in connection with any other person, since Absalom had only one daughter, viz. *Thamar* (2 Sam. xiv. 27), who was fifty years old when Solomon died, Maacah must have been a daughter of this Thamar, who had married Uriel of Gibeah, and therefore a grand-daughter of Absalom. This is sustained by Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 10, 1). The form of the name מִיכָיָהוּ is probably an error in copying for מַעֲכָה, as the name is also written in 2 Chron. xi. 20 and 21, and not a different name, which Maacah assumed as queen, as Caspari supposes (*Micha*, p. 3, note 4).—Vers. 3, 4. Abijam walked as king in the footsteps of his father. Although he made presents to the temple (ver. 15), his heart was not שָׁלֵם, wholly or undividedly given to the Lord, like the heart of David (cf. ch. xi. 4); but (כִּי, after a previous negative) for David's sake Jehovah had left him a light in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him and to let Jerusalem stand, because (אֲשֶׁר) David had done right in the eyes of God, etc., *i.e.* so that it was only for David's sake that Jehovah did not reject him, and allowed the throne to pass to his son. For the fact itself compare ch. xi. 13 and 36; and for the words, "except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite," see 2 Sam. xi. and xii.—Ver. 6. "And there was war between *Rehoboam* and Jeroboam all his life;" *i.e.* the state of hostility which had already existed between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continued "all the days of his life," or so long as Abijam lived and reigned. If we take כָּל־יְמֵי חַיָּיו in this manner (not כָּל־יְמֵיהֶם, ver. 16), the statement loses the strangeness which it has at first sight, and harmonizes very well with that in ver. 7, that there was also war between Abijam and Jeroboam.

Under Abijam it assumed the form of a serious war, in which Jeroboam sustained a great defeat (see 2 Chron. xiii. 3–20).—The other notices concerning Abijam in vers. 7 and 8 are the same as in the case of Rehoboam in ch. xiv. 29 and 31.

Vers. 9–24. Reign of Asa (cf. 2 Chron. xiv.-xvi.).—As Asa ascended the throne in the twentieth year of the reign of Jeroboam, his father Abijam, who began to reign in the eighteenth year of Jeroboam (ver. 1), can only have reigned two years and a few months, and not three full years.—Ver. 10. Asa reigned forty-one years. "The name of his mother was Maacah, the daughter of Absalom." This notice, which agrees verbatim with ver. 2, cannot mean that Abijam had his own mother for a wife; though Thenius finds this meaning in the passage, and then proceeds to build up conjectures concerning emendations of the text. We must rather explain it, as Ephr. Syr., the Rabbins, and others have done, as signifying that Maacah, the mother of Abijam, continued during Asa's reign to retain the post of queen-mother or הַגְּבִירָה, *i.e.* sultana valide, till Asa deposed her on account of her idolatry (ver. 13), probably because Asa's own mother had died at an early age.—Vers. 11 sqq. As ruler Asa walked in the ways of his pious ancestor David: he banished the male prostitutes out of the land, abolished all the abominations of idolatry, which his fathers (Abijam and Rehoboam) had introduced, deposed his grandmother Maacah from the rank of a queen, because she had made herself an idol for the Ashera, and had the idol hewn in pieces and burned in the valley of the Kidron. גִּלֻּלִים is a contemptuous epithet applied to idols (Lev. xxvi. 30); it does not mean *stercorei*, however, as the Rabbins affirm, but logs, from גָּלַל, to roll, or masses of stone, after the Chaldee גְּלָל (Ezra v. 8, vi. 4), generally connected with שִׁקֻּצִים. It is so in Deut. xxix. 16. מִפְלֶצֶת, *formido*, from פָּלַץ, *terrere*, *timere*, hence an idol as an object of fear, and not *pudendum*, a shameful image, as Movers (*Phöniz.* i. p. 571), who follows the Rabbins, explains it, understanding thereby a Phallus as a symbol of the generative and fructifying power of nature. With regard to the character of this idol, nothing further can be determined than that it was of wood, and possibly a wooden column like the אֲשֵׁרִים (see at ch. xiv. 23). "But the high places departed not," *i.e.* were not abolished. By the בָּמוֹת we are not to understand, according to ver. 12, altars of high places dedicated to idols, but unlawful altars to Jehovah. It is so in the other passages in which this formula recurs (ch. xxii. 24; 2 Kings xii. 4, xiv. 4, xv. 4; and the parallel passages 2 Chron. xv. 17, xx. 33). The apparent discrepancy between the last-mentioned passages and 2 Chron. xiv. 2, 4, and xvii. 6, may be solved very simply on the supposition that the kings (Asa and Jehoshaphat) did indeed abolish the altars on the high places, but did not carry their reforms in the nation thoroughly out; and not by distinguishing between the *bamoth* dedicated to Jehovah and those dedicated to idols, as Thenius, Bertheau, and Caspari, with many of the earlier commentators, suppose. For although 2 Chron. xiv. 2 is very favourable to this solution, since both בָּמוֹת and מִזְבְּחוֹת הַנֵּכָר are mentioned there, it does not accord with 2 Chron. xvii. 6, where הַבָּמוֹת cannot be merely idolatrous altars dedicated to the Canaanitish Baal, but unquestionably refer to the unlawful altars of Jehovah, or at any rate include them. Moreover, the next clause in the passage before us, " nevertheless Asa's heart was wholly given to the Lord," shows that the expression לֹא סָרוּ does not mean that the king allowed the unlawful Jehovah-*bamoth* to remain, but simply that, notwithstanding his fidelity to Jehovah, the *bamoth* did not depart, so that he was unable to carry the abolition of them thoroughly out.—Ver. 15. He brought the sacred offerings of his father and his own sacred offerings into the house of Jehovah; probably the booty, in silver, gold, and vessels, which his father Abijam had gathered in the war with Jeroboam (2 Chron. xiii. 16, 17), and he himself on the conquest of the Cushites (2 Chron. xiv. 12, 13). The *Keri* וְקָדְשֵׁי is a bad emendation of the correct reading in the *Chethîb* קדשו, *i.e.* קָדָשָׁו (קֳדָשָׁיו); for בֵּית יְהוָה is an accusative, and is to be connected with וַיָּבֵא.—Vers. 16, 17. The state of hostility between Judah and Israel continued during the reign of Asa; and Baasha the king of Israel advanced, etc. These statements are completed and elucidated by the Chronicles. After the great victory obtained by Abijam over Jeroboam, the kingdom of Judah enjoyed rest for ten years (2 Chron. xiii. 23). Asa employed this time in exterminating idolatry, fortifying different cities, and equipping his army (2 Chron. xiv. 1-7). Then the Cushite *Zerah* invaded the land of Judah with an innumerable army (in the eleventh year of Asa), but was totally defeated by the help of the Lord

(2 Chron. xiv. 8–14); whereupon Asa, encouraged by the prophet Azariah, the son of Oded, proceeded with fresh zeal to the extermination of such traces of idolatry as still remained in the kingdom, then renewed the altar of burnt-offering in front of the temple-hall, and in the fifteenth year of his reign held, with the whole nation, a great festival of thanksgiving and rejoicing to the Lord at Jerusalem (2 Chron. xv. 1–15). The next year, the sixteenth of his reign and the thirty-sixth from the division of the kingdom (2 Chron. xvi. 1), Baasha commenced hostilities, by advancing against Judah, taking possession of *Ramah*, the present *er Râm* (see at Josh. xviii. 25), which was only two hours and a quarter from Jerusalem, and fortifying it. The occupation of Ramah is not expressly mentioned indeed, but it is implied in וַיַּעַל עַל יְהוּדָה, which affirms the hostile invasion of Judah. For Ramah, from its very situation in the heart of the tribe of Benjamin and the immediate neighbourhood of Jerusalem, can neither have been a border city nor have belonged to the kingdom of Israel. The intention of Baasha, therefore, in fortifying Ramah cannot have been merely to restrain his own subjects from passing over into the kingdom of Judah, but was evidently to cut off from the kingdom of Judah all free communication with the north. לְבִלְתִּי תֵּת וגו׳, "that they might not give one going out or one coming in to Asa;" *i.e.* to cut off from the others all connection with Asa, and at the same time to cut off from those with Asa all connection with this side. The main road from Jerusalem to the north passed by Ramah, so that by shutting up this road the line of communication of the kingdom of Judah was of necessity greatly disturbed. Moreover, the fortification of Ramah by Baasha presupposes the reconquest of the cities which Abijam had taken from the kingdom of Israel (2 Chron. xiii. 19), and which, according to 2 Chron. xiii. 19, were still in the possession of Asa.—Vers. 18, 19. In order to avert the danger with which his kingdom was threatened, Asa endeavoured to induce the Syrian king, Benhadad of Damascus, to break the treaty which he had concluded with Baasha and to become his ally, by sending him such treasures as were left in the temple and palace.[1] הַנּוֹתָרִים may be explained from the

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[1] Asa had sought help from the Lord and obtained it, when the powerful army of the Cushites invaded the land; but when an invasion of the Israelites took place, he sought help from the Syrians. This alteration in his con-

fact that the temple and palace treasures had been plundered by Shiṣḥak in the reign of Rehoboam (ch. xiv. 26); and therefore what Asa had replaced in the temple treasury (ver. 15), and had collected together for his palace, was only a remnant in comparison with the former state of these treasures. The name בֶּן־הֲדַד, *i.e.* son of *Hadad*, the sun-god (according to Macrobius, i. 23; cf. Movers, *Phöniz.* i. p. 196), was borne by three kings of Damascus: the one here named, his son in the time of Ahab (ch. xx. 1, 34), and the son of Hazael (2 Kings xiii. 24). The first was a son of *Tabrimmon* and grandson of *Hezyon*. According to ver. 19, his father *Tabrimmon* (good is *Rimmon*; see at 2 Kings v. 18) had also been king, and was the contemporary of Abijam. But that his grandfather *Hezyon* was also king, and the same person as the *Rezon* mentioned in ch. xi. 23, cannot be shown to be even probable, since there is no ground for the assumption that Hezyon also bore the name Rezon, and is called by the latter name here and by the former in ch. xi. 23.—Ver. 20. Benhadad consented to Asa's request, and directed his captains to advance into the kingdom of Israel: they took several cities in the north of the land, whereby Baasha was compelled to give up fortifying Ramah and withdraw to Thirza. *Ijon* (עִיּוֹן) is to be sought for in all probability in Tell *Dibbin*, on the eastern border of *Merj Ayun*; and in *Ajun*, although Ajun is written with *Aleph*, the name *Ijon* is probably preserved, since the situation of this Tell seems thoroughly adapted for a fortress on the northern border of Israel (*vid.* Robinson, *Bibl. Res.* p. 375, and Van de Velde, *Mem.* p. 322). *Dan* is the present *Tell el Kadi*; see at Josh. xix. 47. *Abel-Beth-Maachah*, the present *Abil el Kamh*, to the north-west of Lake Huleh (see at 2 Sam. xx. 14). "All *Chinneroth*" is the district of *Chinnereth*, the tract of land on the western shore of the Lake of Gennesareth (see at Josh. xix. 35). עַל כָּל־אֶרֶץ נ׳, together with all the land of Naphtali (for this meaning of עַל compare the Comm. on Gen. xxxii. 12). The cities named were

duct may probably be explained in part from the fact, that notwithstanding the victory, his army had been considerably weakened by the battle which he fought with the Cushites (2 Chron. xiv. 9), although this by no means justified his want of confidence in the power of the Lord, and still less his harsh and unjust treatment of the prophet Hanani, whom he caused to be put in the house of the stocks on account of his condemnation of the confidence which he placed in the Syrians instead of Jehovah (2 Chron. xvi. 7-10).

the principal fortresses of the land of Naphtali, with which the whole of the country round was also smitten, *i.e.* laid waste.—Ver. 21. וַיֵּשֶׁב, and remained at Thirza, his place of residence (see at ch. xiv. 17).—Ver. 22. Asa thereupon summoned all Judah אֵין נָקִי, *nemine immuni, i.e. excepto,* no one being free (cf. Ewald, § 286, *a*), and had the stones and the wood carried away from Ramah, and *Geba* and *Mizpah* in Benjamin built, *i.e.* fortified, with them. *Geba* must not be confounded with *Gibeah* of Benjamin or Saul, but is the present *Jeba,* three-quarters of an hour to the north-east of Ramah (see at Josh. xviii. 24). *Mizpah,* the present *Nebi Samwil,* about three-quarters of a geographical mile to the south-west of Ramah (see at Josh. xviii. 26).—Vers. 23, 24. Of the other acts of Asa, the building of cities refers to the building of fortifications mentioned in 2 Chron. xiv. 5, 6. The disease in his feet in the time of his old age commenced, according to 2 Chron. xvi. 12, in the thirty-ninth year of his reign; and he sought help from the physicians, but not from the Lord; from which we may see, that the longer he lived the more he turned his heart away from the Lord (compare 2 Chron. xvi. 10).

CHAP. XV. 25–XVI. 28. REIGNS OF THE KINGS OF ISRAEL, NADAB, BAASHA, ELAH, ZIMRI, AND OMRI.

Vers. 25–32. THE REIGN OF NADAB lasted not quite two years, as he ascended the throne in the second year of Asa, and was slain in his third year.—Ver. 6. He walked in the ways of his father (Jeroboam) and in his sin, *i.e.* in the calf-worship introduced by Jeroboam (ch. xii. 28). When Nadab in the second year of his reign besieged Gibbethon, which the Philistines had occupied, Baasha the son of Ahijah, of the house, *i.e.* the family or tribe, of Issachar, conspired against him and slew him, and after he became king exterminated the whole house of Jeroboam, without leaving a single soul, whereby the prediction of the prophet Ahijah (ch. xiv. 10 sqq.) was fulfilled. *Gibbethon,* which was allotted to the Danites (Josh. xix. 44), has not yet been discovered. It probably stood close to the Philistian border, and was taken by the Philistines, from whom the Israelites attempted to wrest it by siege under both Nadab and Baasha (ch. xvi. 16), though apparently without success. לֹא הִשְׁאִיר כָּל־נְשָׁמָה as in Josh. xi. 14 (see the Comm. on Deut. xx.

16).—Ver. 32 is simply a repetition of ver. 16; and the remark concerning Baasha's attitude towards Asa of Judah immediately after his entrance upon the government precedes the account of his reign, for the purpose of indicating at the very outset, that the overthrow of the dynasty of Jeroboam and the rise of a new dynasty did not alter the hostile relation between the kingdom of Israel and the kingdom of Judah.

Ver. 33–ch. xvi. 7. THE REIGN OF BAASHA is described very briefly according to its duration (two years) and its spirit, namely, the attitude of Baasha towards the Lord (ver. 34); there then follow in ch. xvi. 1–4 the words of the prophet Jehu, the son of Hanani (2 Chron. xvi. 7), concerning the extermination of the family of Baasha; and lastly, in vers. 5–7, his death is related with the standing allusion to the annals of the kings. The words of Jehu concerning Baasha (ch. xvi. 1–4) coincide exactly *mutatis mutandis* with the words of Ahijah concerning Jeroboam.[1] The expression "exalted thee out of the dust," instead of "from among the people" (ch. xiv. 7), leads to the conjecture that Baasha had risen to be king from a very low position. גְּבוּרָתוֹ (his might) in ver. 5 refers, as in the case of Asa (ch. xv. 23), less to brave warlike deeds, than generally to the manifestation of strength and energy in his government.—Ver. 7 adds a supplementary remark concerning the words of Jehu (vers. 2 sqq.), not to preclude an excuse that might be made, in which case וְגַם would have to be taken in the sense of nevertheless, or notwithstanding (Ewald, § 354, *a*), but to guard against a misinterpretation by adding a new feature, or rather to preclude an erroneous inference that might be drawn from the words, "I (Jehovah) have made thee prince"

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[1] "There was something very strange in the perversity and stolidity of the kings of Israel, that when they saw that the families of preceding kings were evidently overthrown by the command of God on account of the worship of the calves, and they themselves had overturned them, they nevertheless worshipped the same calves, and placed them before the people for them to worship, that they might not return to the temple and to Asa, king of Jerusalem; though prophets denounced it and threatened their destruction. Truly the devil and the ambition of reigning blinded them and deprived them of their senses. Hence it came to pass, through the just judgment of God, that they all were executioners of one another in turn: Baasha was the executioner of the sons of Jeroboam; Zambri was the executioner of the sons of Baasha; and the executioner of Zambri was Omri."—C. A LAPIDE.

(ver. 2), as though Baasha had exterminated Nadab and his house by divine command (Thenius). וְגַם simply means "*and also*," and is not to be connected specially with בְּיַד יֵהוּא, but to be taken as belonging to the whole sentence: "also the word of Jehovah had come to Baasha through Jehu, . . . not only because of the evil, etc., but also (וְעַל . . . וְעַל) because he had slain him (Jeroboam)." With regard to this last reason, we must call to mind the remark made at ch. xi. 39, viz. that the prediction of the prophet to Baasha gave him no right to put himself forward arbitrarily as the fulfiller of the prophecy. The very fact that Baasha continued Jeroboam's sin and caused the illegal worship to be perpetuated, showed clearly enough that in exterminating the family of Jeroboam he did not act under divine direction, but simply pursued his own selfish ends.

Vers. 8–14. THE REIGN OF ELAH.—As Baasha reigned from the third to the twenty-sixth year of Asa, *i.e.* not quite twenty-four years, but only twenty-three years and a few months, so his son Elah reigned from the twenty-sixth to the twenty-seventh year of Asa, *i.e.* not quite two years.—Vers. 9, 10. *Zimri*, the commander of the half of his war-chariots, conspired against him, and not only slew him, when he was intoxicated (שֹׁתֶה שִׁכּוֹר) at a drinking bout in the house of *Arza*, the prefect of his palace, but after ascending the throne exterminated the whole family of Baasha to the very last man. The prefect of the palace was no doubt a party to the conspiracy, and had probably arranged the drinking bout in his house for the purpose of carrying it out. "He did not leave him מַשְׁתִּין בְּקִיר (see at ch. xiv. 10), either his avengers (גֹּאֲלָיו, blood-relations, who might have avenged his death) or his friends." These words simply serve to explain מַשְׁתִּין בְּקִיר, and show that this phrase is to be understood as relating to males only.—Vers. 12, 13. "According to the word of the Lord;" see at vers. 1 sqq. אֶל כָּל־חַטֹּאות, with regard to all, *i.e.* on account of all the sins (compare ver. 7, where עַל is used). בְּהַבְלֵיהֶם, through their nothingnesses, *i.e.* their idols, by which the golden calves are meant.

Vers. 15–22. THE REIGN OF ZIMRI lasted only seven days. As soon as the people of war (הָעָם), who were besieging Gibbethon (see at ch. xv. 27), heard of his conspiracy, his usurpation of the throne, and his murderous deeds, they proclaimed

Omri king in the camp of the military commanders, and he at once, with all Israel, *i.e.* all the army, raised the siege of Gibbethon, to lay siege to Thirza. Now when Zimri saw that the city was taken, he went into the castle of the royal palace and burned the king's house over his own head, as Sardanapalus did, according to Justin (*Hist.* i. 3). אַרְמוֹן does not mean harem (Ewald), but the high castle (from אָרַם, to be high); here and in 2 Kings xv. 25, the citadel of the royal palace, which consisted of several buildings.—Ver. 19 is connected with וַיָּמֹת in ver. 18: "and so died for his sins," *i.e.* as a punishment for them.—Vers. 21, 22. But Omri did not come into possession of an undisputed sovereignty immediately upon the death of Zimri. The nation divided itself into two halves; one half was behind *Tibni*, the son of Ginath (*i.e.* declared in favour of Tibni), to make him king, the other adhered to *Omri*. Nevertheless Omri's gained the upper hand over the party of Tibni, and the latter died, whereupon Omri became king after four years, as we may see from a comparison of vers. 15, 16 with ver. 23. The "people of Israel" (ver. 21) are probably the fighting people, so that the succession to the throne was decided by the military. הָיָה אַחֲרֵי as in 2 Sam. ii. 10. חָזַק, with an accusative instead of with עַל, in the sense of to overpower, as in Jer. xx. 7. According to Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 12, 5), Tibni was slain by his opponent; but this is not contained in the words; on the contrary, all that is implied in the connection of וַיָּמֹת with וַיֶּחֱזַק וגו' is that he met with his death in the decisive engagement in which the opposing party triumphed.

Vers. 23–28. THE REIGN OF OMRI.—Ver. 23. Omri reigned twelve years, *i.e.*, if we compare vers. 15 and 23 with ver. 29, reckoning from his rebellion against Zimri; so that he only possessed the sole government for eight years (or, more exactly, seven years and a few months), viz. from the 31st to the 38th years of Asa, and the conflict with Tibni for the possession of the throne lasted about four years. "At Thirza he reigned six years," *i.e.* during the four years of the conflict with Tibni, and after his death two years more.—Ver. 24. As soon as he had obtained undisputed possession of the throne, he purchased the hill *Shomron* (Samaria) from *Shemer* (*Semer*) for two talents of silver, about 5200 thalers (£780—TR.), built houses upon it, and named the town which he built after the former owner of the hill שֹׁמְרוֹן, rendered by the LXX. *Σεμηρών* here, but everywhere else *Σαμάρεια* (Samaria), after the Chaldee form שָׁמְרַיִן (Ezra iv. 10, 17). This city he made his seat (*Residenz,* place of residence, or capital), in which he resided for the last six years of his reign, and where he was buried after his death (ver. 28). *Samaria* continued to be the capital of the kingdom of the ten tribes from that time forward, and the residence of all succeeding kings of Israel until the destruction of this kingdom after its conquest by Salmanasar (2 Kings xviii. 9, 10). The city was two hours and a half to the north-west of Sichem, upon a mountain or hill in a mountain-hollow (*Bergkessel,* lit. mountain-caldron) or basin of about two hours in diameter, surrounded on all sides by still higher mountains. "The mountains and valleys round about are still for the most part arable, and are alive with numerous villages and diligent cultivation." The mountain itself upon which Samaria stood is still cultivated to the very top, and about the middle of the slope is surrounded by a narrow terrace of level ground resembling a girdle. And even higher up there are marks of smaller terraces, where streets of the ancient city may possibly have run. After the captivity Samaria was retaken and demolished by John Hyrcanus, and lay in ruins till Gabinius the Roman governor rebuilt it (Joseph. *Ant.* xiii. 19, 2, 3, and xiv. 5, 3). Herod the Great afterwards decorated it in a marvellous manner, built a temple there to the emperor Augustus, and named the city after him *Σεβαστή, i.e. Augusta,* from which arose the present name *Sebuste* or *Sebustieh,* borne by a village which is still standing on the ancient site: "a pitiable hamlet consisting of a few squalid houses, inhabited by a band of plunderers, notorious as thieves even among their lawless fellow-countrymen" (V. de Velde, i. p. 378).—But by the side of this there are magnificent ruins of an ancient Johannite church, with the reputed grave of John the Baptist and remains of limestone columns at the foot of the mountain (cf. Robinson, *Pal.* iii. p. 136 sqq.; Van de Velde, *Syria and Pal.* i. p. 374 sqq.; and C. v. Raumer, *Pal.* pp. 159, 160).—Vers. 25, 26. Omri also walked in the ways of Jeroboam, and acted worse than his predecessors upon the throne.—For vers. 26 and 27, compare vers. 13 and 14.

2. FROM AHAB'S ASCENT OF THE THRONE TO THE DEATH OF JORAM OF ISRAEL AND AHAZIAH OF JUDAH.

CHAP. XVI. 29–2 KINGS X. 27.

In this epoch, which embraces only thirty-four years, the history of the kings of Judah falls so far into the background behind the history of the kingdom of Israel, that it seems to form merely an appendix to it; and the history of the monarchy is so controlled by the description of the labours of the prophets, that it seems to be entirely absorbed in them. These phenomena have their foundation in the development of the two kingdoms during this period. Through the alliance and affinity of Jehoshaphat with the idolatrous Ahab, the kingdom of Judah not only lost the greatest part of the blessing which the long and righteous reign of this pious king had brought, but it became so entangled in the political and religious confusion of the kingdom of Israel in consequence of the participation of Jehoshaphat in the wars between Israel and the Syrians, and other foes, and the inclination of Joram and Ahaziah to the worship of Baal, that its further development during this period was almost entirely dependent upon the history of Israel. In the latter kingdom the prophets maintained a fierce conflict with the idolatry introduced by Ahab and Jezebel, in which the worship of Baal did indeed eventually succumb, but the pure lawful worship of Jehovah did not attain to full supremacy, so that this great spiritual conflict was no more followed by a permanent blessing to the kingdom as such, than the single victories of Ahab and Joram over the Syrians by outward peace and rest from its oppressors. To guard against the spreading apostasy of the people from the living God through the exaltation of the worship of Baal into the ruling national religion in Israel, the Lord raised up the most powerful of all the prophets, Elijah the Tishbite, with his fiery zeal, who worked so mightily upon the formation of the spiritual life of the covenant nation and the fate of the kingdom, not only in his own person in the reigns of Ahab and Ahaziah (ch. xvii.–2 Kings ii.), but indirectly in the person of his successor Elisha under Joram (2 Kings iii.–ix.), and also under the succeeding kings of Israel, that the labours of these prophets and their disciples form the central and culminating point of the Old Testament kingdom of God during the period in question.

CHAP. XVI. 29–34. THE REIGN OF AHAB OF ISRAEL.

The ascent of the throne of Israel by Ahab (ver. 29) formed a turning-point for the worse, though, as a comparison of ver. 30 with ver. 25 clearly shows, the way had already been prepared by his father Omri.—Vers. 30, 31. Whereas the former kings of Israel had only perpetuated the sin of Jeroboam, *i.e.* the calf-worship, or worship of Jehovah under the image of an ox, which he had introduced, Ahab was not satisfied with this. וַיְהִי הֲנָקֵל לֶכְתּוֹ, "it came to pass, was it too little?" *i.e.* because it was too little (cf. Ewald, § 362, *a*) to walk in the sins of Jeroboam, that he took as his wife Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal the king of the Sidonians, and served Baal, and worshipped him. וַיֵּלֶךְ before וַיַּעֲבֹד, "he went and served," is a pictorial description of what took place, to give greater prominence to the new turn of affairs. אֶתְבַּעַל (*i.e.* with Baal) is the *Εἰθώβαλος* (אִתּוֹ בַּעַל or *Ἰθόβαλος*: Jos. *Ant.* viii. 13, 1) mentioned by Menander in Josephus, *c. Ap.* i. 18, who was king of Tyre and Sidon, and priest of Astarte, and who usurped the throne after the murder of his brother, king Pheles, and reigned thirty-two years. Jezebel (אִיזֶבֶל, *i.e.* probably without cohabitation, cf. Gen. xxx. 20, = untouched, chaste; not a contraction of אֲבִיזֶבֶל, as Ewald, § 273, *b*, supposes) was therefore, as tyrant and murderess of the prophets, a worthy daughter of her father, the idolatrous priest and regicide. *Baal* (always הַבַּעַל with the article, *the* Baal, *i.e.* Lord *κατ' ἐξοχήν*) was the principal male deity of the Phœnicians and Canaanites, and generally of the western Asiatics, called by the Babylonians בֵּל = בְּעֵל (Isa. xlvi. 1), *Βῆλος*, and as the sun-god was worshipped as the supporter and first principle of psychical life and of the generative and reproductive power of nature (see at Judg. ii. 13). Ahab erected an altar to this deity בֵּית הַבַּעַל, in the house (temple) of Baal, which he had built at Samaria. The worship of Baal had its principal seat in Tyre, where Hiram, the contemporary of David and Solomon, had built for it a splendid temple and placed a golden pillar (*χρυσοῦν κίονα*) therein, according to Dius and Menander, in Joseph. *Ant.* viii. 5, 3, and *c. Ap.* i. 18. Ahab also erected a similar pillar (מַצֵּבָה) to Baal in his temple at Samaria (*vid.* 2 Kings iii. 2, x. 27). For statues or images of Baal are not met with in the earlier times; and the בְּעָלִים are not statues of Baal, but different modifications of that deity. It was only in the later temple of Baal or Hercules at Tyre that there was, as

Cicero observes (*Verr.* iv. 43), *ex ære simulacrum ipsius Herculis, quo non facile quidquam dixerim me vidisse pulcrius.*—Ver. 33. "And Ahab made אֶת־הָאֲשֵׁרָה, *i.e.* the Asherah belonging to the temple of Baal" (see at Judg. vi. 25 and Ex. xxxiv. 13), an idol of Astarte (see at ch. xiv. 23).—Ver. 34. In his time *Hiël* the Bethelite (בֵּית הָאֱלִי; compare Ges. § 111, 1 with § 86, 2. 5) built Jericho: "he laid the foundation of it with Abiram his first-born, and set up its gates with Segub his youngest, according to the word of Jehovah," etc. (for the explanation see the Comm. on Josh. vi. 26). The restoration of this city as a fortification, upon which Joshua had pronounced the curse, is mentioned as a proof how far ungodliness had progressed in Israel; whilst the fulfilment of the curse upon the builder shows how the Lord will not allow the word of His servants to be transgressed with impunity. *Jericho,* on the border of the tribe of Ephraim (Josh. xvi. 7), which was allotted to the Benjaminites (Josh. xviii. 21), had come into the possession of the kingdom of Israel on the falling away of the ten tribes from the royal house of David, and formed a border city of that kingdom, through the fortification of which Ahab hoped to secure to himself the passage across the Jordan.

The prophets Elijah and Elisha.

When Ahab, who was not satisfied with the sin of Jeroboam, had introduced the worship of Baal as the national religion in the kingdom of the ten tribes, and had not only built a temple to Baal in his capital and place of residence, but had also appointed a very numerous priesthood to maintain the worship (see ch. xviii. 19); and when his godless wife Jezebel was persecuting the prophets of Jehovah, for the purpose of exterminating the worship of the true God: the Lord God raised up the most powerful of all the prophets, namely Elijah the Tishbite, who by his deeds attested his name אֵלִיָּהוּ or אֵלִיָּה, *i.e.* whose God is Jehovah. For however many prophets of Jehovah arose in the kingdom of the ten tribes from its very commencement and bore witness against the sin of Jeroboam in the power of the Spirit of God, and threatened the kings with the extermination of their house on account of this sin, no other prophet, either before or afterwards, strove and worked in the idolatrous kingdom for the honour of the Lord of Sabaoth with anything like the same mighty power of God as the prophet Elijah. And there was no other prophet whom the Lord so gloriously acknowledged by signs and wonders as Elijah, although He fulfilled the words of all His servants by executing the judgments with which they had threatened the rebellious, and whenever it was necessary accredited them as His messengers by miraculous signs. —Although, in accordance with the plan of our books, which was to depict the leading features in the historical development of the kingdom, all that is related in detail of the life and labours of Elijah is the miracles which he performed in his conflict with the worshippers of Baal, and the miraculous display of the omnipotence and grace of God which he experienced therein; yet we may see very clearly that these formed but one side of his prophetic labours from the passing notices of the schools of the prophets, which he visited once more before his departure from the earth (2 Kings ii.); from which it is obvious that this other side of his ministry, which was more hidden from the world, was not less important than his public ministry before the kings and magnates of the land. For these societies of "sons of the prophets," which we meet with at Gilgal, Bethel, and Jericho (2 Kings ii. 3, 5, iv. 38), had no doubt been called into existence by Elijah, by associating together those whose souls were fitted to receive the Spirit of God for mutual improvement in the knowledge and fear of Jehovah, in order to raise up witnesses to the truth and combatants for the cause of the Lord, and through these societies to provide the godly, who would not bow the knee before Baal, with some compensation for the loss of the Levitical priesthood and the want of the temple-worship. Compare the remarks on the schools of the prophets at 1 Sam. xix. 24.—The more mightily idolatry raised its head in the kingdom of Israel, the more powerfully did the Lord show to His people that He, Jehovah, and not Baal, was God and Lord in Israel. In the prophet Elijah there were combined in a marvellous manner a life of solitude spent in secret and contemplative intercourse with God, and an extraordinary power for action, which would suddenly burst forth, and by which he acted as a personal representative of God (see at ch. xvii. 1). In his person the spirit of Moses revived; he was the restorer of the kingdom of God in Israel, of which Moses was the founder. His life recalls that of Moses in many of its features: namely, his flight into the desert, the appearance of the Lord to him at Horeb, and the marvellous termination of his life. Moses and Elijah are the Coryphæi of the Old Testament, in whose life and labours the nature and glory of this covenant are reflected. As the thunder and lightning and the blast of trumpets and the smoking mountain bare witness to the devouring fire of the holiness of the God who had come down upon Sinai to give effect to the promises He had made to the fathers, and to make the children of Israel the people of His possession; so does the fiery zeal of the law come out so powerfully in Moses and Elijah, that their words strike the ungodly like lightning and flames of fire, to avenge the honour of the Lord of Sabaoth and maintain His covenant of grace in Israel. Moses as lawgiver, and Elijah as prophet, are, as Ziegler has well said (p. 206), the two historical anticipations of those two future witnesses, which are "the two olive-trees and two torches standing before the God of the earth. And if any one will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth and devoureth their enemies; and if any man will hurt them, he must therefore be slain. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy, and have power over waters to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth with all kinds of plagues, as often as they will" (Rev. xi. 4 sqq.). Elijah was called to this office of witness to turn the heart of the fathers to the sons, and of the sons to their fathers (Mal. iii. 24), so that in his ministry the prophecy of the future of the kingdom of God falls quite into the background. Nevertheless he was not only a forerunner but also a type of the Prophet promised by Moses, who was to fulfil both law and prophets (Matt. v. 17); and therefore he appeared as the representative of prophecy, along with Moses the representative of the law, upon the mount of the Transfiguration, to talk with Christ of the decease which He was to accomplish at Jerusalem (Luke ix. 31; Matt. xvii. 3).—To continue his work, Elijah, by command of God, called *Elisha* the son of Shaphat, of Abel-Meholah, who during the whole of his prophetic course carried on with power the restoration of the law in the kingdom of Israel, which his master had begun, by conducting schools of the prophets and acting as the counsellor of kings, and proved himself by many signs and wonders to be the heir of a double portion of the gifts of Elijah.

Modern theology, which has its roots in naturalism, has taken offence at the many miracles occurring in the history of these two prophets, but it has overlooked the fact that these miracles were regulated by the extraordinary circumstances under which Elijah and Elisha worked. At a time when the sovereignty of the living God in Israel was not only called in question, but was to be destroyed by the worship of Baal, it was necessary that Jehovah as the covenant God should interpose in a supernatural manner, and declare His eternal Godhead in extraordinary miracles. In the kingdom of the ten tribes there were no priestly or Levitical duties performed; nor was there the regular worship of God in a temple sanctified by Jehovah Himself; whilst the whole order of life prescribed in the law was undermined by unrighteousness and ungodliness. But with all this, the kingdom was not yet ripe for the judgment of rejection, because there were still seven thousand in the land who had not bowed their knee before Baal. For the sake of these righteous men, the Lord had still patience with the sinful kingdom, and sent it prophets to call the rebellious to repentance. If, then, under the circumstances mentioned, the prophets were to fulfil the purpose of their mission and carry on the conflict against the priests of Baal with success, they needed a much greater support on the part of God, through the medium of miracles, than the prophets in the kingdom of Judah, who had powerful and venerable supports in the Levitical priesthood and the lawful worship.[1] It is only when we overlook the object of these miracles, therefore, that they can possibly appear strange. "If," as Kurtz has said,[2] "we take the history of our prophet as one living organic link in the whole of the grand chain of the marvellous works of God, which stretches from Sinai to Golgotha and the Mount of Olives, and bear in mind the peculiarity of the position and circumstances of Elijah, the occurrence of a miracle in itself, and even the accumulation of them and their supposed externality, will appear to us in a very different light.—Without miracle, without very striking, *i.e.* external miracles, their ministry would have been without basis, without a starting-point, and without hold."—The miracles are still more numerous in the history of Elisha, and to some extent bear such a resemblance to those of Elijah, that the attempt has been made to set them down as merely legendary imitations of the latter; but considered as a whole, they are more of a helpful and healing nature, whereas those of Elijah are for the most part manifestations of judicial and punitive wrath. The agreement and the difference may both be explained from Elisha's position in relation to Elijah and his time. By the performance of similar and equal miracles (such as the division of the Jordan, 2 Kings ii. 8 and 14; the increase of the oil, 2 Kings iv. 3 sqq. compared with 1 Kings xvii. 14 sqq.; the raising of the dead, 2 Kings iv. 34 sqq. compared with 1 Kings xvii. 19 sqq.) Elisha proved himself to be the divinely-appointed successor of Elijah, who was carrying forward his master's work (just as Joshua by the drying up of the Jordan proved himself to be the continuer of the work of Moses), and as such performed more miracles, so far as number is concerned, than even his master had done, though he was far inferior to him in spiritual power. But the difference does not prevail throughout. For whilst the helpful and healing side of Elijah's miraculous power is displayed in his relation to the widow at Zarephath; the judicial and punitive side of that of Elisha comes out in the case of the mocking boys at Bethel, of Gehazi, and of Joram's knight. But the predominance of strict judicial sternness in the case of Elijah, and of sparing and helpful mildness in that of Elisha, is to be accounted for not so much from any difference in the personality of the two, as from the altered circumstances. Elijah, with his fiery zeal, had broken the power of the Baal-worship, and had so far secured an acknowledgment of the authority of Jehovah over His people that Joram and the succeeding kings gave heed to the words of the prophets of the Lord; so that Elisha had for the most part only to cherish and further the conversion of the people to their God, for which Elijah had prepared the way.

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[1] "Where the temple was wanting, and image-worship took its place, and the priesthood was an unlawful caste, it was only by extraordinary methods that the spreading evil could be met. The illegitimacy, which was represented here by the monarchy and priesthood, was opposed by the prophetic order as the representative of the law, and therefore also as a peculiarly constituted and strong body divided up into societies of considerable scope, and having a firm organization. And this prophetic order, as the only accredited representative of the law, also took the place of the law, and was therefore endowed with the power and majesty of the law which had been manifested in wonders and signs. Not only was the spirit of Moses inherited by Elijah and others, but his miraculous power also."—HAEVERNICK, *Einl. in d. A. Test.* ii. 1, pp. 166, 167. Compare Hengstenberg, *Dissertation*, vol. i. p. 186 sqq.

[2] Herzog's *Cyclopædia*, Art. *Elijah.*

CHAP. XVII. FIRST APPEARANCE OF ELIJAH.

The prophet Elijah predicts to Ahab, as a punishment for his idolatry, the coming of a drought and famine. During their continuance he is miraculously preserved by God, first of all at the brook Cherith, and then at the house of a widow at Zarephath (vers. 1–16), whose deceased son he calls to life again (vers. 17–24).

Ver. 1. Elijah the Tishbite is introduced without the formula "The word of the Lord came to . . .," with which the appearance of the prophets is generally announced, proclaiming to king Ahab in the name of the Lord the punitive miracle of a drought that will last for years. This abrupt appearance of Elijah cannot be satisfactorily explained from the fact that we have not the real commencement of his history here; it is rather a part of the character of this mightiest of all the prophets, and indicates that in him the divine power of the Spirit appeared as it were personified, and his life and acts were the direct effluence of the higher power by which he was impelled. His origin is also uncertain. The epithet הַתִּשְׁבִּי is generally derived from a place called *Tishbeh*, since, according to Tobit i. 2, there existed in Upper Galilee a *Θίσβη ἐκ δεξιῶν Κυδίως*, "on the right, *i.e.* to the south of *Kydios*," probably *Kedesh* in the tribe of Naphtali, from which the elder Tobias was carried away captive, although this description of the place is omitted in the Hebrew version of the book of Tobit issued by Fagius and Münster, and in the Vulgate. And to this we must adhere, and as no other Thisbe occurs, must accept this Galilean town as the birthplace of Elijah; in which case the expression "of the settlers of Gilead" indicates that Elijah did not live in his birthplace, but dwelt as a foreigner in Gilead. For תּוֹשָׁב in itself by no means denotes a non-Israelite, but, like גֵּר, simply one who lived away from his home and tribe relations in the territory of a different tribe, without having been enrolled as a member of it, as is clearly shown by Lev. xxv. 40, and still more clearly by Judg. xvii. 7, where a Levite who was born in Bethlehem is described as גֵּר in the tribe of Ephraim.[1] The expression "as truly as Jehovah the God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand (*i.e.* whom I serve; see at ch. i. 2), there shall not fall dew and rain these years, except at my word," was a special application of the threats of the law in Deut. xi. 16, 17, xxviii. 23, 24, and Lev. xxvi. 19, to the idolatrous kingdom. הַשָּׁנִים הָאֵלֶּה, "these (ensuing) years," does not fix any definite terminus. In לְפִי דְבָרִי there is involved an emphatic antithesis to others, and more especially to the prophets of Baal. "When I shall say this by divine authority and might, let others prate and lie as they may please" (*Berleb. Bibel*). Elijah thereby describes himself as one into whose power the God of Israel has given up the idolatrous king and his people. In Jas. v. 17, 18, this act of Elijah is

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[1] The supposition of Seb. Schmidt, with which I formerly agreed, namely, that Elijah was a foreigner, a Gentile by birth, after further examination I can no longer uphold, though not from the *à priori* objection raised against it by Kurtz (in Herzog's *Cycl.*), namely, that it would show a complete misapprehension of the significance of Israel in relation to sacred history and the history of the world, and that neither at this nor any other time in the Old Testament history could a prophet for Israel be called from among the Gentiles,—an assertion of which it would be difficult to find any proof,—but because we are not forced to this conclusion by either הַתִּשְׁבִּי or מִתֹּשָׁבֵי גִלְעָד. For

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even if the Thisbeh in Tob. i. 2 should not be Elijah's birthplace, it would not follow that there was no other place named Thisbeh in existence. How many places in Canaan are there that are never mentioned in the Old Testament! And such cases as that described in Judg. vii. 7, where the Levite is said to have left his birthplace and to have lived in another tribe as a foreigner or settler, may not have been of rare occurrence, since the Mosaic law itself refers to it in Lev. xxv. 41.—Again, the LXX. were unable to explain מִתֹּשָׁבֵי גִלְעָד, and have paraphrased these words in an arbitrary manner by ὁ ἐκ Θεσβῶν τῆς Γαλαάδ, from which Thenius and Ewald conjecture that there was a Thisbeh in Gilead, and that it was probably the *Tisieh* (طيسية) mentioned by Robinson (*Pal.* iii. 153) to the south of *Busra*=*Bostra*. The five arguments by which Kurtz has attempted to establish the probability of this conjecture are very weak. For (1) the defective writing מִתֹּשָׁבֵי by no means proves that the word which is written *plene* (תּוֹשָׁב) in every other case must necessarily have been so written in the *stat. constr. plur.*; and this is the only passage in the whole of the Old Testament in which it occurs in the *stat. constr. plur.*;—(2) the precise description of the place given in Tobit i. 2 does not at all lead "to the assumption that the Galilean Thisbeh was not the only place of that name," but may be fully explained from the fact that Thisbeh was a small and insignificant place, the situation of which is defined by a reference to a larger town and one better known;—(3) there is no doubt that "Gilead very frequently denotes the whole of the country to the east of the Jordan," but this does not in the least degree prove that there was a Thisbeh in the country to the east of the Jordan;—(4) "that the distinction and difference between a birthplace and a place of abode are improbable in themselves, and not to be expected in this connection," is a perfectly unfounded assumption, and has first of all to be proved;—(5) the Tisieh mentioned by Robinson cannot be taken into consideration, for the simple reason that the assumption of a copyist's error, the confusion of بـ with يـ (*Tisieh* instead of *Thisbeh*), founders on the long *i* of the first syllable in *Tisieh*; moreover the Arabic ط corresponds to the Hebrew ט and not to ת.

ascribed to the power of his prayers, since Elijah "was also a man such as we are," inasmuch as the prophets received their power to work solely through faith and intercourse with God in prayer, and faith gives power to remove mountains.

Vers. 2–9. After the announcement of this judgment, Elijah had to hide himself, by the command of God, until the period of punishment came to an end, not so much that he might be safe from the wrath and pursuit of Ahab and Jezebel, as to preclude all earnest entreaties to remove the punishment. "For inasmuch as the prophet had said that the rain would come at his word, how would they have urged him to order it to come!" (Seb. Schm.) He was to turn קֵדְמָה, eastward, *i.e.* from Samaria, where he had no doubt proclaimed the divine judgment to Ahab, to the Jordan, and to hide himself at the brook *Cherith*, which is in front of the Jordan. The brook Cherith was in any case a brook emptying itself into the Jordan; but whether upon the eastern or the western side of that river, the ambiguity of עַל־פְּנֵי, which means both "to the east of" (Gen. xxv. 18) and also "in the face of," *i.e.* before or towards (Gen. xvi. 12, xviii. 16), it is impossible to determine with certainty. That it must signify "to the east of the Jordan" here, does not follow from קֵדְמָה with anything like the certainty that Thenius supposes. An ancient tradition places the Cherith on this side of the Jordan, and identifies it with the spring *Phasaelis*, which takes its rise in the slope of the mountains into the Jordan valley above the city of *Phasaelis*, and empties itself into the Jordan (cf. Ges. *thes.* p. 719, and V. de Velde, *Reise*, ii. pp. 273–4); whereas Eusebius, in the *Onom. s.v. Chorat* (*Χορρά*), places it on the other side of the Jordan, and Thenius thinks of the apparently deep Wady *Rajib* or *Ajlun*. All that can be affirmed with certainty is, that neither the brook *Kanah* (Josh. xvi. 8, xvii. 9), which flows into the Mediterranean, nor the Wady *Kelt* near Jericho, which Robinson (*Pal.* ii. p. 288) suggests, can possibly come into consideration: the latter for the simple reason, that the locality in the neighbourhood of Jericho was unsuitable for a hiding-place. Elijah was to drink of this brook, and the ravens by divine command were to provide him with bread and meat, which they brought him, according to ver. 6, both morning and evening. It is now generally admitted that הָעֹרְבִים does not mean either Arabs or Orebites (the inhabitants of an imaginary city named Oreb), but *ravens*. Through this miracle, which unbelievers reject, because they do not acknowledge a living God, by whom, as the Creator and Lord of all creatures, even the voracious ravens are made subservient to His plans of salvation, Elijah was not only cut off from intercourse with men, who might have betrayed his place of abode to the king, but was mightily strengthened himself, through the confidence inspired in the almighty assistance of his God, for his approaching contests with the worshippers of idols, and for the privations and sufferings which awaited him in the fulfilment of his vocation.—Vers. 7–9. After some time this brook dried up for want of rain. Then the Lord directed His servant to go to the Sidonian *Zarephath*, and to live with a widow whom He had commanded to provide for him. מִקֵּץ יָמִים does not mean *post annum*, for יָמִים merely derives this meaning in certain passages from the context (cf. Lev. xxv. 29; 1 Sam. xxvii. 7; Judg. xvii. 10); whereas in this instance the context does not point to the space of a year, but to a longer period of indefinite duration, all that we know being that, according to ch. xviii. 1, the sojourn of Elijah at Cherith and Zarephath lasted at least two years. Zarephath (Σαρέπτα, LXX.) was situated on the Mediterranean Sea between Tyre and Sidon, where a miserable Mohammedan village with ruins and a promontory, *Surafend*, still preserve the name of the former town (Rob. iii. p. 413 sqq., and V. de Velde, *Syria and Palestine*, i. pp. 101–3, transl.).

Vers. 10–16. When Elijah arrived at the city gate, he met a widow engaged in gathering wood. To discover whether it was to her that the Lord had sent him, he asked her for something to drink and for a morsel of bread to eat; whereupon she assured him, with an oath by Jehovah, that she had nothing baked (מָעוֹג = עֻגָּה, ἐγκρυφίας, a cake baked in hot ashes), but only a handful of meal in the כַּד (a pail or small vessel in which meal was kept) and a little oil in the pitcher, and that she was just gathering wood to dress this remnant for herself and her son, that they might eat it, and then die. From this statement of the widow it is evident, on the one hand, that the drought and famine had spread across the Phœnician frontier, as indeed Menander of Ephesus attests;[1] on the other hand, the widow showed by the oath, "as Jehovah thy God liveth," that she was a worshipper of the true God, who spoke of *Jehovah* as his God, because she recognised the prophet as an Israelite.—Vers. 13 sqq. In order, however, to determine with indisputable certainty whether this believing Gentile was the protectress assigned him by the Lord, Elijah comforted her, and at the same time desired her first of all to bake him a little cake מִשָּׁם, *i.e.* of the last of the meal in the *Kad* and of the oil in the pitcher, and then to bake for herself and her son, adding this promise: Jehovah the God of Israel will not let the meal in the *Kad* and the oil in the pitcher fail, till Hē sends rain upon the earth again. And the widow did according to his word. She gave up the certain for the uncertain, because she trusted the word of the Lord, and received the reward of her believing confidence in the fact that during the whole time of the drought she suffered from no want of either meal or oil. This act of the pious Gentile woman, who had welcomed with a simple heart the knowledge of the true God that had reached her from Israel, must have been the source of strong consolation to Elijah in the hour of conflict, when his faith was trembling because of the multitude of idolaters in Israel. If the Lord Himself had raised up true worshippers of His name among the Gentiles, his work in Israel could not be put to shame. The believing widow, however, received from the prophet not only a material blessing, but a spiritual blessing also. For, as Christ tells His unbelieving contemporaries to their shame (Luke iv. 25, 26), Elijah was not sent to this widow in order that he might be safely hidden at her house, although this object was better attained thereby than by his remaining longer in Israel; but because of her faith, namely, to strengthen and to increase it, he was sent to her, and not to one of the many widows in Israel, many of whom would also have received the prophet if they had been rescued by him from the pressure of the famine. And the miraculous increase of the meal and oil did not merely subserve the purpose of keeping the prophet and the widow alive; but the relief of her bodily need was also meant to be a preparatory means of quieting her spiritual need as well. On the *Chethîb* תִּתֵּן, see at ch. vi. 19. In ver. 15 the *Keri* הִיא וָהוּא is an unnecessary emendation of the *Chethîb* הוּא וָהִיא; the feminine form וַתֹּאכַל is occasioned primarily by the preceding verbs, and may be taken as an indefinite neuter: "and there ate he and she." The offence which Thenius has taken at יָמִים (days) has no foundation, if we do not understand the sentence as referring merely to their eating once of the bread just baked, but take it generally as signifying that in consequence of their acting according to the word of Jehovah, they (Elijah, the widow, and her family) ate for days, *i.e.* until God sent rain again (ver. 14).

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[1] Josephus gives this statement from his Phœnician history: ἀβροχία τε ἐπ' αὐτοῦ (*sc.* Ἰθοβάλου) ἐγένετο ἀπὸ τοῦ Ὑπερβερεταίου μηνὸς ἕως τοῦ ἐρχομένου ἔτους Ὑπερβερεταίου (*Ant.* viii. 13, 2). *Hyperberetæus* answers to *Tishri* of the Hebrews; cf. Benfey and Stern, *die Monatsnamen*, p. 18.

Vers. 17–24. *The widow's deceased son raised to life again.*—Ver. 17. After these events, when Elijah had taken up his abode in the upper room of her house, her son fell sick, so that he breathed out his life. עַד אֲשֶׁר וגו׳, literally till no breath remained in him. That these words do not signify merely a death-like torpor, but an actual decease, is evident from what follows, where Elijah himself treats the boy as dead, and the Lord, in answer to his prayer, restores him to life again.—Ver. 18. The pious woman discerned in this death a punishment from God for her sin, and supposed that it had been drawn towards her by the presence of the man of God, so that she said to Elijah, "What have we to do with one another (מַה־לִּי וָלָךְ; cf. Judg. xi. 12; 2 Sam. xvi. 10), thou man of God? Hast thou come to me to bring my sin to remembrance (with God), and to kill my son?" In this half-heathenish belief there spoke at the same time a mind susceptible to divine truth and conscious of its sin, to which the Lord could not refuse His aid. Like the blindness in the case of the man born blind mentioned in John ix., the death of this widow's son was not sent as a punishment for particular sins, but was intended as a medium for the manifestation of the works of God in her (John ix. 3), in order that she might learn that the Lord was not merely the God of the Jews, but the God of the Gentiles also (Rom. iii. 29).—Vers. 19, 20. Elijah told her to carry the dead child up to the chamber in which he lived and lay it upon his bed, and then cried to the Lord, "Jehovah, my God! hast Thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, to slay her son?" These words, in which the word *also* refers to the other calamities occasioned by the drought, contain no reproach of God, but are expressive of the heartiest compassion for the suffering of his benefactress and the deepest lamentation, which, springing from living faith, pours out the whole heart before God in the hour of distress, that it may appeal to Him the more powerfully for His aid. The meaning is, "Thou, O Lord my God, according to Thy grace and righteousness, canst not possibly leave the son of this widow in death." Such confident belief carries within itself the certainty of being heard. The prophet therefore proceeds at once to action, to restore the boy to life.—Ver. 21. He stretched himself (יִתְמֹדֵד) three times upon him, not to ascertain whether there was still any life left in him, as Paul did in Acts xx. 10, nor to warm the body of the child and set its blood in circulation, as Elisha did with a dead child (2 Kings iv. 34),—for the action of Elisha is described in a different manner, and the youth mentioned in Acts xx. 10 was only apparently dead,—but to bring down the vivifying power of God upon the dead body, and thereby support his own word and prayer.[1] He then cried to the Lord, " Jehovah, my God, I pray Thee let the soul of this boy return within it." עַל־קִרְבּוֹ, inasmuch as the soul as the vital principle springs from above. —Vers. 22, 23. The Lord heard this prayer: the boy came to life again; whereupon Elijah gave him back to his mother.—Ver. 24. Through this miracle, in which Elijah showed himself as the forerunner of Him who raiseth all the dead to life, the pious Gentile woman was mightily strengthened in her faith in the God of Israel. She now not only recognised Elijah as a man of God, as in ver. 18, but perceived that the word of Jehovah in his mouth was truth, by which she confessed *implicite* her faith in the God of Israel as the true God.

CHAP. XVIII. ELIJAH'S MEETING WITH AHAB, AND VICTORY OVER THE PROPHETS OF BAAL.

As the judgment of drought and famine did not bring king Ahab to his senses and lead him to turn from his ungodly ways, but only filled him with exasperation towards the prophet who had announced to him the coming judgment; there was no other course left than to lay before the people with mighty and convincing force the proof that Jehovah was the only true God, and to execute judgment upon the priests of Baal as the seducers of the nation.

Vers. 1–19. *Elijah's meeting with Ahab.*—Vers. 1 and 2*a*. In the third year of his sojourn at Zarephath the word of the Lord came to Elijah to show himself to Ahab; since God was about to send rain upon the land again. The time given, " the third year," is not to be reckoned, as the Rabbins, Clericus,

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[1] " This was done, that the prophet's body might be the instrument of the miracle, just as in other cases of miracle there was an imposition of the hand." —SEB. SCHMIDT.

Thenius, and others assume, from the commencement of the drought, but from the event last mentioned, namely, the sojourn of Elijah at Zarephath. This view merits the preference as the simplest and most natural one, and is shown to be the oldest by Luke iv. 25 and Jas. v. 17, where Christ and James both say, that in the time of Ahab it did not rain for three years and six months. And this length of time can only be obtained by allowing more than two years for Elijah's stay at Zarephath.—From ver. 2*b* to ver. 6 we have parenthetical remarks introduced, to explain the circumstances which led to Elijah's meeting with Ahab. The verbs וַיִּקְרָא, וַיְהִי, וַיֹּאמֶר, and וַיִּחַלְּקוּ (vers. 3, 4, 5, 6) carry on the circumstantial clauses: "and the famine was . . ." (ver. 2*b*), and "Obadiah feared . . ." (ver. 3*b*), and are therefore to be expressed by the pluperfect. When the famine had become very severe in Samaria (the capital), Ahab, with Obadiah the governor of his castle (אֲשֶׁר עַל הַבַּיִת, see at ch. iv. 6), who was a God-fearing man, and on the persecution of the prophets of Jehovah by Jezebel had hidden a hundred prophets in caves and supplied them with food, had arranged for an expedition through the whole land to seek for hay for his horses and mules. And for this purpose they had divided the land between them, so that the one explored one district and the other another. We see from ver. 4 that Jezebel had resolved upon exterminating the worship of Jehovah, and sought to carry out this intention by destroying the prophets of the true God. The hundred prophets whom Obadiah concealed were probably for the most part pupils ("sons") of the prophets. חֲמִשִּׁים אִישׁ must signify, according to the context and also according to ver. 13, "fifty each," so that חֲמִשִּׁים must have fallen out through a copyist's error. וְלוֹא נַכְרִית מִן, that we may not be obliged to kill (a portion) of the cattle (מִן partitive). The *Keri* מֵהַבְּהֵמָה is no doubt actually correct, but it is not absolutely necessary, as the *Chethîb* מִן בְּהֵמָה may be taken as an indefinite phrase: "any head of cattle."—Vers. 7, 8. Elijah met Obadiah on this expedition, and told him to announce his coming to the king.—Vers. 9 sqq. Obadiah was afraid that the execution of this command might cost him his life, inasmuch as Ahab had sent in search of Elijah "to every kingdom and every nation,"—a hyperbole suggested by inward excitement and fear. וְאָמְרוּ אָיִן is to be connected with what follows in spite of the accents: "and if they said he is not here, he took an oath," etc.—Vers. 12, 13. "And if it comes to pass (that) I go away from thee, and the Spirit of Jehovah carries thee away whither I know not, and I come to tell Ahab (*sc.* that thou art here) and he findeth thee not, he will slay me, and thy servant feareth the Lord from his youth," etc.; *i.e.* since I as a God-fearing man and a protector of the prophets cannot boast of any special favour from Ahab. מִנְּעֻרָי, from *my* youth up: "thy servant" being equivalent to "I myself." From the fear expressed by Obadiah that the Spirit of Jehovah might suddenly carry the prophet to some unknown place, Seb. Schmidt and others have inferred that in the earlier history of Elijah there had occurred some cases of this kind of sudden transportation, though they have not been handed down; but the anxiety expressed by Obadiah might very well have sprung from the fact, that after Elijah had announced the coming drought to Ahab, he disappeared, and, notwithstanding all the inquiries instituted by the king, was nowhere to be found. And since he was not carried off miraculously then (compare the לֵךְ and וַיֵּלֶךְ, "get thee hence" and "he went," in ch. xvii. 3, 5), there is all the less ground for imagining cases of this kind in the intermediate time, when he was hidden from his enemies. The subsequent translation of Elijah to heaven (2 Kings ii. 11, 12), and the miraculous carrying away of Philip from the chamberlain of Mauritania (Acts viii. 39), do not warrant any such assumption; and still less the passage which Clericus quotes from Ezekiel (iii. 12, 14), because the carrying of Ezekiel through the air, which is mentioned here, only happened in vision and not in external reality. If Obadiah had known of any actual occurrence of this kind, he would certainly have stated it more clearly as a more striking vindication of his fear.—Vers. 15–19. But when Elijah assured him with an oath (יְהוָֹה צְבָאוֹת, see at 1 Sam. i. 3) that he would show himself to Ahab that day, Obadiah went to announce it to the king; whereupon Ahab went to meet the prophet, and sought to overawe him with the imperious words, "Art thou here, thou troubler of Israel?" (עֹכֵר, see at Gen. xxxiv. 30). But Elijah threw back this charge: "It is not I who have brought Israel into trouble, but thou and thy family, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of Jehovah, and thou goest after Baalim." He then called upon the king to gather together all Israel to him upon Carmel, together with the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of

Asherah, who ate of Jezebel's table, *i.e.* who were maintained by the queen.

CARMEL, a mountain ridge "with many peaks, intersected by hundreds of larger and smaller ravines," which stands out as a promontory running in a north-westerly direction into the Mediterranean (see at Josh. xix. 26), and some of the loftiest peaks of which rise to the height of 1800 feet above the level of the sea, when seen from the northern or outer side shows only "bald, monotonous rocky ridges, scantily covered with short and thorny bushes;" but in the interior it still preserves its ancient glory, which has procured for it the name of "fruitfield," the valleys being covered with the most beautiful flowers of every description, and the heights adorned with myrtles, laurels, oaks, and firs (cf. V. de Velde, *R.* i. p. 292 sqq.). At the north-western extremity of the mountain there is a celebrated Carmelite monastery, dedicated to Elijah, whom tradition represents as having lived in a grotto under the monastery; but we are certainly not to look there for the scene of the contest with the priests of Baal described in the verses which follow. The scene of Elijah's sacrifice is rather to be sought for on one of the south-eastern heights of Carmel; and Van de Velde (i. p. 320 sqq.) has pointed it out with great probability in the ruins of *el Mohraka*, *i.e.* "the burned place," "a rocky level space of no great circumference, and covered with old gnarled trees with a dense entangled undergrowth of bushes." For "one can scarcely imagine a spot better adapted for the thousands of Israel to have stood drawn up on than the gentle slopes. The rock shoots up in an almost perpendicular wall of more than 200 feet in height on the side of the vale of Esdraelon. On this side, therefore, there was no room for the gazing multitude; but, on the other hand, this wall made it visible over the whole plain, and from all the surrounding heights, so that even those left behind, who had not ascended Carmel, would still have been able to witness at no great distance the fire from heaven that descended upon the altar."—"There is not a more conspicuous spot on all Carmel than the abrupt rocky height of el Mohraka, shooting up so suddenly on the east." Moreover, the soil was thoroughly adapted for the erection of the altar described in vers. 31 and 32: "it showed a rocky surface, with a sufficiency of large fragments of rock lying all around, and, besides, well fitted for the rapid digging of a trench."

There is also water in the neighbourhood, as is assumed in ver. 34. "Nowhere does the Kishon run so close to Mount Carmel as just beneath el Mohraka," which is "1635 feet above the sea, and perhaps 1000 feet above the Kishon. This height can be gone up and down in the short time allowed by the Scripture (vers. 40–44)." But it was possible to find water even nearer than this, to pour upon the burnt-offering in the manner described in vers. 34, 35. Close by the steep rocky wall of the height, just where you can descend to the Kishon through a steep ravine, you find, "250 feet it might be beneath the altar plateau, a vaulted and very abundant fountain built in the form of a tank, with a few steps leading down into it, just as one finds elsewhere in the old wells or springs of the Jewish times."—"From such a fountain alone could Elijah have procured so much water at that time. And as for the distance between this spring and the supposed site of the altar, it was every way possible for men to go thrice thither and back again to obtain the necessary supply." Lastly, el Mohraka is so situated, that the circumstances mentioned in vers. 42–44 also perfectly coincide (Van de Velde, pp. 322–325).

Vers. 20–46. *Elijah's contest with the prophets of Baal.*—Ahab sent through all Israel and gathered the prophets (of Baal) together upon Mount Carmel. According to vers. 21, 22, and 39, a number of the people ("all the people") had also come with them. On the other hand, not only is there no further reference in what follows to the 400 prophets of Asherah (cf. vers. 25 and 40), but in ver. 22 it is very obvious that the presence of the 450 prophets of Baal alone is supposed. We must therefore assume that the Asherah prophets, foreboding nothing good, had found a way of evading the command of Ahab and securing the protection of Jezebel.[1] King Ahab also appeared upon Carmel (cf. ver. 41), as he had no idea of

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[1] It is true that in ver. 22 the LXX. have this clause, *καὶ οἱ προφῆται τοῦ ἄλσους* (*i.e.* הָאֲשֵׁרָה) *τετρακόσιοι*, which Thenius regards as an original portion of the text, though without observing the character of the LXX. If the Asherah prophets had also been present, Elijah would not only have commanded the prophets of Baal to be seized and slain (ver. 40), but the Asherah prophets also. From the principle *a potiori fit*, etc., it may be possible to explain the omission of the Asherah prophets in ver. 25, but not in ver. 40.

Elijah's intention, which was by no means "to prove to the king that he (Ahab) and not Elijah had brought Israel into trouble" (Vat., Seb. Schm.), but to put before the eyes of the whole nation a convincing practical proof of the sole deity of Jehovah and of the nothingness of the Baals, that were regarded as gods, and by slaying the priests of Baal to give a death-blow to idolatry in Israel.—Ver. 21. Elijah addressed the assembled people as follows: "How long do ye limp upon both sides? Is Jehovah God, then go after Him; but if Baal be God, then go after him"—and the people answered him not a word. They wanted to combine the worship of Jehovah and Baal, and not to assume a hostile attitude towards Jehovah by the worship of Baal; and were therefore obliged to keep silence under this charge of infatuated halving, since they knew very well from the law itself that Jehovah demanded worship with a whole and undivided heart (Deut. vi. 4, 5). This dividing of the heart between Jehovah and Baal Elijah called limping עַל שְׁתֵּי הַסְּעִפִּים, "upon the two parties (of Jehovah and Baal)." For סְעִפִּים the meaning "divided opinions, parties," is well established by the use of סֵעֲפִים in Ps. cxix. 113; and the rendering of the LXX. *ἰγνύαι*, the hollow of the knee, is only a paraphrase of the sense and not an interpretation of the word. —Vers. 22–25. As the people adhered to their undecided double-mindedness, Elijah proposed to let the Deity Himself decide who was the true God, Jehovah or Baal. The prophets of Baal were to offer a sacrifice to Baal, and he (Elijah) would offer one to Jehovah. And the true God should make Himself known by kindling the burnt-offering presented to Him with fire from heaven, and in this way answering the invocation of His name. This proposal was based upon the account in Lev. ix. As Jehovah had there manifested Himself as the God of Israel by causing fire to fall from heaven upon the first sacrifice presented in front of the tabernacle and to consume it, Elijah hoped that in like manner Jehovah would even now reveal Himself as the living God. And the form of decision thus proposed would necessarily appear all the fairer, because Elijah, the prophet of Jehovah, stood alone in opposition to a whole crowd of Baal's prophets, numbering no less than 450 men. And for that very reason the latter could not draw back, without publicly renouncing their pretensions, whether they believed that Baal would really do what was desired, or hoped that they might be able to escape, through some accident or stratagem, from the difficult situation that had been prepared for them, or fancied that the God of Elijah would no more furnish the proof of His deity that was desired of Him than Baal would. In order, however, to cut off every subterfuge in the event of their attempt proving a failure, Elijah not only yielded the precedence to them on the occasion of this sacrifice, but gave them the choice of the two oxen brought to be offered; which made the fairness of his proposal so much the more conspicuous to every one, that the people willingly gave their consent.

Vers. 26–29. The prophets of Baal then proceeded to the performance of the duty required. They prepared (יַעֲשׂוּ) the sacrifice, and called solemnly upon Baal from morning to noon: "O Baal, hear us," limping round the altar; "but there was no voice, and no one to hear (to answer), and no attention." פִּסֵּחַ is a contemptuous epithet applied to the pantomimic sacrificial dance performed by these priests round about the altar,[1] אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה ("which one had made").—Ver. 27. As no answer had been received before noon, Elijah cried out to them in derision: "Call to him with a loud voice, for he is God (*sc.* according to your opinion), for he is meditating, or has gone aside (שִׂי, *secessio*), or is on the journey (בַּדֶּרֶךְ, on the way); perhaps he is sleeping, that he may wake up." The ridicule lies more especially in the כִּי אֱלֹהִים הוּא (for he is a god), when contrasted with the enumeration of the different possibilities which may have occasioned their obtaining no answer, and is heightened by the earnest and threefold repetition of the כִּי. With regard to these possibilities we may quote the words of Clericus: "Although these things when spoken of God are the most absurd things possible, yet idolaters could believe such things, as we may see from Homer." The priests of Baal did actually begin therefore to cry louder than before, and scratched themselves with swords and lances, till the blood poured out, "according to their custom" (כְּמִשְׁפָּטָם). Movers describes this as follows (*Phönizier*, i. pp. 682, 683), from statements made by ancient authors concerning the processions of the strolling bands of the Syrian goddess: "A discordant howling opens the scene. They then rush wildly about in perfect confusion, with their heads bowed down to the ground, but always revolving in circles, so that the loosened hair drags through the mire; they then begin to bite their arms, and end with cutting themselves with the two-edged swords which they are in the habit of carrying. A new scene then opens. One of them, who surpasses all the rest in frenzy, begins to prophesy with sighs and groans; he openly accuses himself of the sins which he has committed, and which he is now about to punish by chastising the flesh, takes the knotted scourge, which the *Galli* generally carry, lashes his back, and then cuts himself with swords till the blood trickles down from his mangled body." The climax of the Bacchantic dance in the case of the priests of Baal also was the prophesying (הִתְנַבֵּא), and it was for this reason, probably, that they were called prophets (נְבִיאִים). This did not begin till noon, and lasted till about the time of the evening sacrifice (עַד לַעֲלוֹת, not עַד עֲלוֹת, ver. 29). עֲלוֹת הַמִּנְחָה, "the laying on (offering) of the meat-offering," refers to the daily evening sacrifice, which consisted of a burnt-offering and a meat-offering (Ex. xxix. 38 sqq.; Num. xxviii. 3–8), and was then offered, according to the Rabbinical observance (see at Ex. xii. 6), in the closing hours of the afternoon, as is evident from the circumstances which are described in vers. 40 sqq. as having taken place on the same day and subsequently to Elijah's offering, which was presented at the time of the evening sacrifice (ver. 36).

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[1] The following is the description which Herodian (*hist.* v. 3), among others, gives of Heliogabalus when dancing as chief priest of the Emesinian sun-god: Ἱερουργοῦντα δὴ τοῦτον, περί τε τοῖς βωμοῖς χορεύοντα νόμῳ Βαρβάρων, ὑπό τε αὐλοῖς καὶ σύριγξι παντοδαπῶν τε ὀργάνων ἤχῳ.

Vers. 30–39. *Elijah's sacrifice.*—As no answer came from Baal, Elijah began to prepare for his own sacrifice. Ver. 30. He made the people come nearer, that he might have both eye-witnesses and ear-witnesses present at his sacrifice, and restored the altar of Jehovah which was broken down. Consequently there was already an altar of Jehovah upon Carmel, which either dated from the times anterior to the building of the temple, when altars of Jehovah were erected in different places throughout the land (see at ch. iii. 2), or, what is more probable, had been built by pious worshippers belonging to the ten tribes since the division of the kingdom (Hengstenberg, *Dissertations on the Pentateuch*, vol. i. p. 183, transl.), and judging from ch. xix. 10, had been destroyed during the reign of Ahab, when the worship of Baal gained the upper hand.—Vers. 31, 32.

Elijah took twelve stones, "according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the Lord had come (Gen. xxxii. 29, xxxv. 10), Israel shall be thy name," and built these stones into an altar. The twelve stones were a practical declaration on the part of the prophet that the division of the nation into two kingdoms was at variance with the divine calling of Israel, inasmuch as according to the will of God the twelve tribes were to form *one* people of Jehovah, and to have a common sacrificial altar; whilst the allusion to the fact that Jehovah had given to the forefather of the nation the name of Israel, directs attention to the wrong which the seceding ten tribes had done in claiming the name of Israel for themselves, whereas it really belonged to the whole nation. בְּשֵׁם יְהוָֹה (in the name of Jehovah) belongs to יִבְנֶה (built), and signifies by the authority and for the glory of Jehovah. "And made a trench as the space of two seahs of seed (*i.e.* so large that you could sow two seahs[1] of seed upon the ground which it covered) round about the altar." The trench must therefore have been of considerable breadth and depth, although it is impossible to determine the exact dimensions, as the kind of seed-corn is not defined. He then arranged the sacrifice upon the altar, and had four *Kad* (pails) of water poured three times in succession upon the burnt-offering which was laid upon the pieces of wood, so that the water flowed round about the altar, and then had the trench filled with water.[2] Elijah adopted this course for the purpose of precluding all suspicion of even the possibility of fraud in connection with the miraculous burning of the sacrifice. For idolaters had carried their deceptions to such a length, that they would set fire to the wood of the sacrifices from hollow spaces concealed beneath the altars, in order to make the credulous people believe that the sacrifice had been miraculously set on fire by the deity. Ephraem Syrus and Joh. Chrysostom both affirm this; the latter in his *Oratio in Petrum Apost. et Eliam proph.* t. ii. p. 737, ed. Montf., the genuineness of which, however, is sometimes called in question.—Vers. 36, 37. After these preparations at the time of the evening sacrifice, Elijah drew near and prayed: "Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel (this name is used with deliberate purpose instead of Jacob: see at ver. 31), let it be known this day that Thou art God in Israel, and I am Thy servant, and do all these things through Thy word. Hear me, Jehovah, hear me, that this people may know that Thou Jehovah art God, and turnest back their hearts!" (*i.e.* back from idols to Thyself.) This clearly expresses not only the object of the miracle which follows, but that of miracles universally. The perfects עָשִׂיתִי and הֲסִבֹּתָ are used to denote not only what has already occurred, but what will still take place and is as certain as if it had taken place already. עָשִׂיתִי refers not merely to the predicted drought and to what Elijah has just been doing (Thenius), but to the miracle which was immediately about to be performed; and הֲסִבֹּתָ to the conversion of the people to the Lord their God, for which Elijah's coming had already prepared the way, and which was still further advanced by the following miracle. —Ver. 38. Then fire of Jehovah fell and consumed the burnt-offering and the pieces of wood, etc. אֵשׁ יְהוָֹה, the fire proceeding from Jehovah, was not a natural flash of lightning, which could not produce any such effect, but miraculous fire falling from heaven, as in 1 Chron. xxi. 26, 2 Chron. vii. 1 (see at Lev. ix. 24), the supernatural origin of which was manifested in the fact, that it not only consumed the sacrifice with the pile of wood upon the altar, but also burned up (*in calcem redegit*—Cler.) the stones of the altar and the earth that was thrown up to form the trench, and licked up the water in the trench. Through this miracle Jehovah not only accredited Elijah as His servant and prophet, but proved Himself to be the living God, whom Israel was to serve; so that all the people who were present fell down upon their faces in worship, as they had done once before, viz. at the consecration of the altar in Lev. ix. 24, and confessed "Jehovah is God:" הָאֱלֹהִים, the true or real God.

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[1] *i.e.* about two Dresden pecks (*Metzen*).—THENIUS.

[2] Thenius throws suspicion upon the historical character of this account, on the ground that "the author evidently forgot the terrible drought, by which the numerous sources of the Carmel and the Nachal Kishon *must* have been dried up;" but Van de Velde has already answered this objection, which has been raised by others also, and has completely overthrown it by pointing out the covered well of *el Mohraka*, in relation to which he makes the following remark: "In such springs the water remains always cool, under the shade of a vaulted roof, and with no hot atmosphere to evaporate it. While all other fountains were dried up, I can well understand that there might have been found here that superabundance of water which Elijah poured so profusely over the altar" (vol. i. p. 325, transl.). But the drying up of the Kishon is a mere conjecture, which cannot be historically proved.

Vers. 40–46. Elijah availed himself of this enthusiasm of the people for the Lord, to deal a fatal blow at the prophets of Baal, who turned away the people from the living God. He commanded the people to seize them, and had them slain at the brook Kishon, and that not so much from revenge, *i.e.* because it was at their instigation that queen Jezebel had murdered the prophets of the true God (ver. 13), as to carry out the fundamental law of the Old Testament kingdom of God, which prohibited idolatry on pain of death, and commanded that false prophets should be destroyed (Deut. xvii. 2, 3, xiii. 13 sqq.).[1]—Ver. 41. Elijah then called upon the king, who had eaten nothing from morning till evening in his eagerness to see the result of the contest between the prophet and the priests of Baal, to come up from the brook Kishon to the place of sacrifice upon Carmel, where his wants were provided for, and to partake of meat and drink, for he (Elijah) could already hear the noise of a fall of rain. קוֹל is without a verb, as is often the case (*e.g.* Isa. xiii. 4, lii. 8, etc.); literally, it is the sound, the noise. After the occasion of the curse of drought, which had fallen upon the land, had been removed by the destruction of the idolatrous priests, the curse itself could also be removed. "But this was not to take place without the prophet's saying it, and by means of this gift proving himself afresh to be the representative of God" (O. v. Gerlach).—Vers. 42 sqq. While the king was refreshing himself with food and drink, Elijah went up to the top of Carmel to pray that the Lord would complete His work by fulfilling His promise (ver. 1) in sending rain; and continued in prayer till the visible commencement of the fulfilment of his prayer was announced by his servant, who, after looking out upon the sea seven times, saw at last a small cloud ascend from the sea about the size of a man's hand.[1] The peculiar attitude assumed by Elijah, when praying (Jas. v. 18), viz. bowing down even to the earth (יִגְהַר) and putting his face between his knees, probably the attitude of deep absorption in God, was witnessed by Shaw and Chardin in the case of certain dervishes (*vid.* Harmar, *Beobachtungen*, iii. pp. 373–4).—Ver. 44. As soon as the small cloud ascended from the sea, Elijah sent his servant to tell the king to set off home, that he might not be stopped by the rain. רֵד, go down, *sc.* from Carmel to his chariot, which was standing at the foot of the mountain.[2]—Ver. 45. Before any provision had been made for it (עַד־כֹּה וְעַד־כֹּה: hither and thither, *i.e.* while the hand is being moved to and fro, "very speedily;" cf. Ewald, § 105, *b*) the heaven turned black with clouds and wind, *i.e.* with storm-clouds (Thenius), and there came a great fall of rain, while Ahab drove along the road to Jezreel. It was quite possible for the king to reach Jezreel the same evening from that point, namely, from the foot of Carmel below *el Mohraka:* but only thence, for every half-hour farther west would have taken him too far from his capital for it to be possible to accomplish the distance before the rain overtook him (V. de Velde, i. p. 326). *Jezreel,* the present *Zerin* (see at Josh. xix. 18), was probably the summer residence of Ahab (see at Josh. xxi. 1). The distance from *el Mohraka* thither is hardly 2¾ German geographical miles (? 14 Engl. miles—Tr.) in a straight line.—Ver. 46. When Ahab drove off, the hand of the Lord came upon Elijah, so that he ran before Ahab as far as Jezreel,—not so much for the purpose of bringing the king to his residence unhurt (Seb. Schm.), as to give him a proof of his humility, and thus deepen the impression already made upon his heart, and fortify him all the more against the strong temptations of his wife, who abused his weakness to support the cause of ungodliness. This act of Elijah, whom Ahab had hitherto only known as a stern, imperious, and powerful prophet, by which he now showed himself to be his faithful subject and servant, was admirably adapted to touch the heart of the king, and produce the conviction that it was not from any personal dislike to him, but only in the service of the Lord, that the prophet was angry at his idolatry, and that he was not trying to effect his ruin, but rather his conversion and the salvation of his soul. יַד יְהוָה, the hand (*i.e.* the power) of the Lord, denotes the supernatural strength with which the Lord endowed him, to accomplish superhuman feats. This formula is generally applied to the divine inspiration by which the prophets were prepared for their prophesying (cf. 2 Kings iii. 15 ; Ezek. i. 3, iii. 15, etc.).

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[1] It was necessary that idolatry and temptation to the worship of idols should be punished with death, as a practical denial of Jehovah the true God and Lord of His chosen people, if the object of the divine institutions was to be secured. By putting the priests of Baal to death, therefore, Elijah only did what the law required; and inasmuch as the ordinary administrators of justice did not fulfil their obligations, he did this as an extraordinary messenger of God, whom the Lord had accredited as His prophet before all the people by the miraculous answer given to his prayer.—To infer from this act of Elijah the right to institute a bloody persecution of heretics, would not only indicate a complete oversight of the difference between heathen idolaters and Christian heretics, but the same reprehensible confounding of the evangelical standpoint of the New Testament with the legal standpoint of the Old, which Christ condemned in His own disciples in Luke ix. 55, 56.

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[1] V. de Velde has shown how admirably these circumstances (vers. 43 and 44) also apply to the situation of *el Mohraka* : "on its west and north-west side the view of the sea is quite intercepted by an adjacent height. That height may be ascended, however, in a few minutes, and a full view of the sea obtained from the top" (i. p. 326).

[2] "After three years' drought all herbage must have disappeared from the plain of Jezreel, and the loose clay composing its soil must have been changed into a deep layer of dust. Had time been allowed for the rain to convert that dust into a bed of mud, the chariot-wheels might have stuck fast in it."—V. de Velde, i. pp. 326-7.

CHAP. XIX. ELIJAH'S FLIGHT INTO THE DESERT, THE REVELATION OF GOD AT HOREB, AND ELISHA'S CALL TO BE A PROPHET.

The hope of completing his victory over the idolaters and overthrowing the worship of Baal, even in the capital of the kingdom, with which Elijah may have hastened to Jezreel, was frustrated by the malice of the queen, who was so far from discerning any revelation of the almighty God in the account given her by Ahab of what had occurred on Carmel, and bending before His mighty hand, that, on the contrary, she was so full of wrath at the slaying of the prophets of Baal as to send to the prophet Elijah to threaten him with death. This apparent failure of his ministry was the occasion of a severe inward conflict, in which Elijah was brought to a state of despondency and fled from the land. The Lord allowed His servant to pass through this conflict, that he might not exalt himself, but, being mindful of his own impotence, might rest content with the grace of his God, whose strength is mighty in the weak (2 Cor. xii. 8, 9), and who would refine and strengthen him for the further fulfilment of his calling.

Vers. 1–8. *Elijah's flight into the desert and guidance to Horeb.*—Vers. 1, 2. When "Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and all, how he had slain all the prophets (of Baal)," she sent a messenger to Elijah in her impotent wrath, with a threat, which she confirmed by an oath (see at ch. ii. 23), that in the morning she would have him slain like the prophets whom he had put to death. The early commentators detected in this threat the *impotentia muliebris iracundiæ*, and saw that all that

Jezebel wanted was to get rid of the man who was so distressing and dangerous to her, because she felt herself unable to put him to death, partly on account of the people, who were enthusiastic in his favour, and partly on account of the king himself, upon whom the affair at Carmel had not remained without its salutary effect.—Vers. 3, 4. But when Elijah saw (וַיַּרְא), *sc.* how things stood, or the audacity of Jezebel, from which the failure of his work was evident, he rose up and went to Beersheba in Judah, *i.e.* Bir-seba on the southern frontier of Canaan (see at Gen. xxi. 31). The expression אֲשֶׁר לִיהוּדָה, "which to Judah," *i.e.* which belonged to the kingdom of Judah, for Beersheba was really allotted to the tribe of Simeon (Josh. xix. 2), is appended not merely as a geographical indication that Elijah went outside the land, but to show that he meant to leave the kingdom of Israel, the scene of his previous labours, just as Jeremiah in a similar internal conflict gave utterance to the wish that he could leave his people, if he had but a lodging-place in the wilderness (Jer. ix. 2). וַיַּרְא is not to be altered into וַיִּרָא, *et timuit,* after the LXX. and Vulg., notwithstanding the fact that some Codd. have this reading, which only rests upon an erroneous conjecture. For it is obvious that Elijah did not flee from any fear of the vain threat of Jezebel, from the fact that he did not merely withdraw into the kingdom of Judah, where he would have been safe under Jehoshaphat from all the persecutions of Jezebel, but went to Beersheba, and thence onwards into the desert, there to pour out before the Lord God his weariness of life (ver. 4). יֵלֶךְ אֶל־נַפְשׁוֹ, he went upon his soul, or his life, *i.e.* not to save his life (as I once thought, with many other commentators), for his wish to die (ver. 4) is opposed to this; but to care for his soul in the manner indicated in ver. 4, *i.e.* to commit his soul or his life to the Lord his God in the solitude of the desert, and see what He would determine concerning him.[1]—He left his servant in Beersheba, while he himself went a day's journey farther into the desert (Paran), not merely because he was so filled with weariness of life in his dark oppression, that he thought he should have no further need of his servant, and therefore left him behind in Beersheba, but that he might pour out his heart before God alone in the desert and yield himself up to His guidance. For however unquestionably his lamentation in ver. 4, for example, expresses a weariness of life, this merely indicates the feeling which had taken possession of his soul after a day's journey in the barren desert. And even there he lays his wish to die before God in prayer; so that this feeling is merely to be regarded as one result of the spiritual conflict, which his bodily exhaustion had now raised to a height that it cannot have reached when he was in Beersheba. If, therefore, he did not start with the intention of making a pilgrimage to Horeb, he had certainly gone into the desert for the purpose of seeing whether the Lord would manifest His mercy to him, as He had formerly done to His people under Moses, or whether He would withdraw His hand entirely from him. After a day's journey he sat down under a רֹתֶם (construed here as a feminine, in ver. 5 as a masculine), a species of broom (*genista Retem* in Forskâl), which is the finest and most striking shrub of the Arabian desert, growing constantly in the beds of streams and in the valleys, where places of encampment are frequently selected for the sake of the shelter which they afford by night from the wind and by day from the sun (Rob. *Pal.* i. 299). וַיִּשְׁאַל . . . לָמוּת: and wished that his soul might die (a kind of accusative with infinitive; see Ewald, § 336, *b*), and said, רַב עַתָּה, "Enough now; take, Lord, my soul, for I am not better than my fathers;" *i.e.* I have worked and endured enough, and deserve no longer life than my fathers. From this it appears that Elijah was already of a great age.—Vers. 5 sqq. In this disturbed state of mind he lay down and slept under a broom-tree. Then the Lord came with His power to the help of the despairing man. "An angel touched him (wakened him out of his sleep), and said to him: Arise, eat." And behold he saw at his head עֻגַת רְצָפִים, a bread cake baked over red-hot stones, a savoury article of food which is still a great favourite with the Bedouins (see at Gen. xviii. 6, xix. 3), and a pitcher of water,

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[1] G. Menken (*christl. Homil. üb. den Proph. Elias,* p. 231) has given the following admirable explanation of אל נפשו so far as the sense is concerned: "For conscience sake, from conviction, out of obligation, not from fear. After all his former experience, and from the entire relation in which Elijah stood to God, it was impossible that he should be afraid, and not be firmly convinced that the God who had shut up heaven at his word, who had supplied him with bread and flesh for a whole year in the desert through the medium of ravens, who had supported him miraculously for years in a foreign land through the

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medium of a poor widow, who had concealed and rescued him for three years and a half from the search of the king, who had accredited and honoured him in the sight of all the people as His servant, who had given an immediate answer to his prayer for rain, could also defend him in this extremity, and rescue him from this danger, if such should be His will."

and ate and drank, and lay down again.—Ver. 7. But the angel wakened him a second time, and called upon him to eat with these words: "for the way is too far for thee" (רַב מִמְּךָ הַדָּרֶךְ, *iter est majus quam pro viribus tuis*—Vat.).—Ver. 8. "Then he arose, ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to the mount of God at Horeb." As the angel did not tell him whither he was to go, and Elijah wandered to Horeb in consequence of this strengthening, it appears to have been his intention from the very beginning to go into the desert, and see whether the Lord would still further acknowledge him and his work; so that in the support and strength imparted by the angel he saw an indication that he was to follow the footsteps of the divine grace still farther into the desert, and make a pilgrimage to Horeb, with the hope that there perhaps the Lord would reveal to him His counsel concerning the further guidance of the people of His covenant, as He had formerly done to His servant Moses, and give him the necessary instruction for the continuance of his prophetic service. *Horeb* is called the mount of God here, as it was proleptically in Ex. iii. 1, as the place where the Lord confirmed the covenant, already made with the patriarchs, to their descendants, and adopted the tribes of Israel as His people and made them into a kingdom of God. The distance from Beersheba to Horeb is about 200 miles. Consequently Elijah would not have required forty days to travel there, if the intention of God had been nothing more than to cause him to reach the mountain, or "to help him on his way" (Thenius). But in the strength of the food provided by the angel Elijah was not only to perform the journey to Horeb, but to wander in the desert for forty days and forty nights, *i.e.* forty whole days, as Moses had formerly wandered with all Israel for forty years; that he might know that the Lord was still the same God who had nourished and sustained His whole nation in the desert with manna from heaven for forty years. And just as the forty years' sojourn in the desert had been to Moses a time for the trial of faith and for exercise in humility and meekness (Num. xii. 3), so was the strength of Elijah's faith to be tried by the forty days' wandering in the same desert, and to be purified from all carnal zeal for the further fulfilment of His calling, in accordance with the divine will. What follows shows very clearly that this was the object of the divine guidance of Elijah (cf. Hengstenberg, *Diss. on the Pentateuch*, vol. i. 171, 172).

Vers. 9-18. *Appearance of God at Horeb.*—Ver. 9. When Elijah arrived at Horeb, he went into *the* cave (the definite article in הַמְּעָרָה, with the obvious connection between the appearance of God, which follows here, and that described in Ex. xxxiii. 12 sqq., points back to the cleft in the rock, נִקְרַת הַצּוּר) in which Moses had stood while the glory of Jehovah passed by (see at Ex. xxxiii. 22), and there he passed the night. And behold the word of the Lord came to him (in the night): "What doest thou here, Elijah?" This question did not involve a reproof, as though Elijah had nothing to do there, but was simply intended to lead him to give utterance to the thoughts and feelings of his heart.—Ver. 10. Elijah answered: "I have striven zealously for Jehovah the God of hosts, for the children of Israel have forsaken Thy covenant, destroyed Thine altars, and killed Thy prophets with the sword; and I only am left, and they seek my life." In these words there was not only the greatest despair expressed as to the existing condition of things, but also a carnal zeal which would gladly have called down the immediate vengeance of the Almighty upon all idolaters. The complaint contained, on the one hand, the tacit reproof that God had looked on quietly for so long a time at the conduct of the ungodly, and had suffered things to come to such an extremity, that he, His prophet, was the only one left of all the true worshippers of God, and, on the other hand, the indirect appeal that He would interpose at last with His penal judgments. Because Elijah had not seen the expected salutary fruits of his zeal for the Lord, he thought that all was lost, and in his gloomy state of mind overlooked what he had seen a short time before with his own eyes, that even in the neighbourhood of the king himself there lived a pious and faithful worshipper of Jehovah, viz. Obadiah, who had concealed a hundred prophets from the revenge of Jezebel, and that the whole of the people assembled upon Carmel had given glory to the Lord, and at his command had seized the prophets of Baal and put them to death, and therefore that the true worshippers of the Lord could not all have vanished out of Israel. קַנֹּא קִנֵּאתִי לַיהוָֹה recalls to mind the zeal of Phinehas (Num. xxv. 11 sqq.), which put an end to the whoredom of the sons of Israel with the daughters of Moab. But whereas Phinehas received the promise of an everlasting priesthood for his zeal, Elijah had seen so little fruit from his zeal against the worshippers of Baal, that they actually sought his life. מִזְבְּחֹתֶךָ are altars, which pious Israelites in the kingdom of the ten tribes had built in different places for the worship of Jehovah (see at ch. xviii. 30).—Vers. 11 sqq. The Lord replied to the prophet's complaint first of all by the manifestation of His control of the phenomena of nature (vers. 11–13), and then by a verbal explanation of His design (vers. 15–18).

In this divine revelation men have recognised from the very earliest times a repetition of the appearance of God which was granted to Moses upon Sinai. As God, in token of His grace, granted the prayer of Moses that he might see His glory, after he had striven zealously for the honour of the Lord when the people rebelled by worshipping the golden calf; so did He also display His glory upon Horeb to Elijah as a second Moses for the purpose of strengthening his faith, with this simple difference, that He made all His goodness pass by Moses, and declared His name in the words, "Jehovah, a gracious and merciful God," etc. (Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7), whereas He caused Elijah first of all to behold the operation of His grace in certain phenomena of nature, and then afterwards made known to him His will with regard to Israel and to the work of His prophets. This difference in the form of the revelation, while the substance and design were essentially the same, may be explained from the difference not only in the historical circumstances, but also in the state of mind of the two servants to whom He manifested His glory. In the case of Moses it was burning love for the welfare of his people which impelled him to offer the prayer that the Lord would let him see His glory, as a sign that He would not forsake His people; and this prayer was granted him, so far as a man is ever able to see the glory of God, to strengthen him for the further discharge of the duties of his office. Hidden in the cleft of the rock and shielded by the hand of God, he saw the Lord pass by him, and heard Him utter in words His inmost being. Elijah, on the other hand, in his zeal for the honour of God, which was not quite free from human passion, had been led by the want of any visible fruit from his own labour to overlook the work of the Lord in the midst of His people; so that he had fled into the desert and wished to be released from this world by death, and had not been brought out of his despair by the strengthening with meat and drink which he had received from the angel, and which enabled him to travel for forty days to the mount of

God without suffering from want, a fact which was intended to remind him of the ancient God of the fathers, to whose omnipotence and goodness there is no end; so that it was in a most gloomy state of mind that he reached Horeb at last. And now the Lord designed not only to manifest His glory as the love in which grace and righteousness are united, but also to show him that his zeal for the honour of the Lord was not in harmony with the love and grace and long-suffering of God. "The design of the vision was to show to the fiery zeal of the prophet, who wanted to reform everything by means of the tempest, the gentle way which God pursues, and to proclaim the long-suffering and mildness of His nature, as the voice had already done to Moses on that very spot; hence the beautiful change in the divine appearance" (Herder, *Geist der hebr. Poesie*, 1788, ii. p. 52).—Vers. 11, 12. After God had commanded him to come out of the cave and stand upon the mountain (that part of the mountain which was in front of the cave) before Him, "behold Jehovah went by (the participle עֹבֵר is used to give a more vivid representation of the scene); and a great and strong tempest, rending mountains and breaking rocks in pieces, before Jehovah—it was not in the tempest that Jehovah was; and after the tempest an earthquake—it was not in the earthquake that Jehovah was; and after the earthquake fire—it was not in the fire that Jehovah was; and after the fire a still, gentle rustling." קוֹל דְּמָמָה דַקָּה, literally the tone of a gentle blowing. On the change of gender in רוּחַ גְּדוֹלָה וְחָזָק, see Ewald, § 174, *e*.—Tempest, earthquake, and fire, which are even more terrible in the awful solitude of the Horeb mountains than in an inhabited land, are signs of the coming of the Lord to judgment (cf. Ps. xviii. 8 sqq.). It was in the midst of such terrible phenomena that the Lord had once come down upon Sinai, to inspire the people who were assembled at the foot of the mountain with a salutary dread of His terrible majesty, of the fiery zeal of His wrath and love, which consumes whatever opposes it (see at Ex. xix. 16 sqq.). But now the Lord was not in these terrible phenomena; to signify to the prophet that He did not work in His earthly kingdom with the destroying zeal of wrath, or with the pitiless severity of judgment. It was in a soft, gentle rustling that He revealed Himself to him.—Vers. 13, 14. When Elijah heard this, he covered up his face in his cloak (אַדֶּרֶת; see at 2 Kings i. 8) and went out to the entrance to the cave. And behold he heard the question a second time, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" and answered with a repetition of his complaint (see vers. 9 and 10).—While the appearance of God, not in the tempest, the earthquake, and the fire, but in a gentle rustling, revealed the Lord to him as a merciful and gracious God, long-suffering, and of great goodness and truth (Ex. xxxiv. 6), the answer to his complaint showed him that He did not leave guilt unpunished (Ex. xxxiv. 7), since the Lord gave him the following command, vers. 15 sqq.: "Go back in thy way to the desert of Damascus, and anoint Hazael king over Aram (see 2 Kings viii. 12, 13), and Jehu the son of Nimshi king over Israel (see 2 Kings ix. 2), and Elisha the son of Shaphat prophet in thy stead" (see ver. 19); and then added this promise, which must have quieted his zeal, that was praiseworthy in the feelings from which it sprang, although it had assumed too passionate a form, and have given him courage to continue his prophetic work: "And it will come to pass, that whoever escapeth the sword of Hazael, him will Jehu slay, and whoever escapeth the sword of Jehu, him will Elisha slay."—Ver. 18. But in order that he might learn, to his shame, that the cause of the Lord in Israel appeared much more desperate to his eye, which was clouded by his own dissatisfaction, than it really was in the eye of the God who knows His own by number and by name, the Lord added: "I have seven thousand left in Israel, all knees that have not bent before Baal, and every mouth that hath not kissed him." מִדְבַּרָה דַמֶּשֶׂק, into the desert of Damascus (with the *He loc.* with the construct state as in Deut. iv. 41, Josh. xii. 1, etc.; cf. Ewald, § 216, *b*), *i.e.* the desert lying to the south and east of the city of Damascus, which is situated on the river *Barady;* not *per desertum in Damascum* (Vulg., Luth., etc.); for although Elijah would necessarily pass through the Arabian desert to go from Horeb to Damascus, it was superfluous to tell him that he was to go that way, as there was no other road. The words "return by thy way . . . and anoint Hazael," etc., are not to be understood as signifying that Elijah was to go at once to Damascus and anoint Hazael there, but simply that he was to do this at a time which the Spirit would more precisely indicate. According to what follows, all that Elijah accomplished immediately was to call Elisha to be his successor; whereas the other two commissions were fulfilled by Elisha after Elijah's ascension to heaven

(2 Kings viii. and ix.). The opinion that Elijah also anointed Hazael and Jehu immediately, but that this anointing was kept secret, and was repeated by Elisha when the time for their public appearance arrived, has not only very little probability in itself, but is directly precluded by the account of the anointing of Jehu in 2 Kings ix. The anointing of Hazael and Jehu is mentioned first, because God had chosen these two kings to be the chief instruments of His judgments upon the royal family and people for their idolatry. It was only in the case of Jehu that a real anointing took place (2 Kings ix. 6); Hazael was merely told by Elisha that he would be king (2 Kings viii. 13), and Elisha was simply called by Elijah to the prophetic office by having the cloak of the latter thrown upon him. Moreover, the Messianic passage, Isa. lxi. 1, is the only one in which there is any allusion to the anointing of a prophet. Consequently מָשַׁח must be taken figuratively here, as in Judg. ix. 8, as denoting divine consecration to the regal and prophetic offices. And so, again, the statement that Elisha would slay those who escaped the sword of Jehu is not to be understood literally. Elisha slew by the word of the Lord, which brought judgments upon the ungodly, as we see from 2 Kings ii. 24 (cf. Jer. i. 10, xviii. 7). The "seven thousand," who had not bowed the knee before Baal, are a round number for the ἐκλογή of the godly, whom the Lord had preserved for Himself in the sinful kingdom, which was really very large in itself, however small it might be in comparison with the whole nation. The number *seven* is the stamp of the works of God, so that seven thousand is the number of the "remnant according to the election of grace" (Rom. xi. 5), which had then been preserved by God. *Kissing* Baal was the most usual form in which this idol was worshipped, and consisted not merely in throwing kisses with the hand (cf. Job xxxi. 27, and Plin. *h. n.* 28, 8), but also in kissing the images of Baal, probably on the feet (cf. Cicero *in Verr.* 4, 43).

Vers. 19–21. *Call of Elisha to be a prophet.*—Ver. 19. As he went thence (viz. away from Horeb), Elijah found *Elisha* the son of Shaphat at Abel-Meholah, in the Jordan valley (see at Judg. vii. 22), occupied in ploughing; "twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he himself with the twelfth" (a very wealthy man therefore), and threw his cloak to him as he passed by. The prophet's cloak was a sign of the prophet's vocation, so that throwing it to him was a symbol of the call to the prophetic office.—Ver. 20. Elisha understanding the sign, left the oxen standing, ran after Elijah, and said to him, "Let me kiss my father and my mother," *i.e.* take leave of my parents, and then I will follow thee. For the form אֶשְּׁקָה see Ewald, § 228, *b*. As he has ploughed his earthly field with his twelve pair of oxen, he was now to plough the spiritual field of the twelve tribes of Israel (Luke ix. 62). Elijah answered, "Go, return, for what have I done to thee?" לֵךְ שׁוּב belong together, as in ver. 15; so that Elijah thereby gave him permission to return to his father and mother. כִּי signifies *for*, not *yet* (Thenius); for there is no antithesis here, according to which כִּי might serve for a more emphatic assurance (Ewald, § 330, *b*). The words "what have I done to thee?" can only mean, I have not wanted to put any constraint upon thee, but leave it to thy free will to decide in favour of the prophetic calling.—Ver. 21. Then Elisha returned, took the pair of oxen with which he had been ploughing, sacrificed, *i.e.* slaughtered them (זָבַח used figuratively), boiled the flesh with the plough, gave a farewell meal to the people (of his place of abode), *i.e.* his friends and acquaintance, and then followed Elijah as his servant, *i.e.* his assistant. The suffix in בִּשְּׁלָם refers to צֶמֶד הַבָּקָר, and is more precisely defined by the apposition הַבָּשָׂר, "namely, the flesh of the oxen."

CHAP. XX. AHAB'S DOUBLE VICTORY OVER BENHADAD OF SYRIA.

Even if the impression which the miracle upon Carmel had made upon Ahab, who was weak rather than malevolent, remained without any lasting fruit, the Lord did very quickly manifest His mercy towards him, by sending a prophet with a promise of victory when the Syrians invaded his kingdom, and by giving the Syrians into his power. This victory was a fruit of the seven thousand who had not bent their knee before Baal. Elijah was also to learn from this that the Lord of Sabaoth had not yet departed from the rebellious kingdom.

Vers. 1–22. THE FIRST VICTORY.—Ver. 1. Benhadad, the son of that Benhadad who had conquered several cities of Galilee in the reign of Baasha (ch. xv. 20), came up with a great army—there were thirty-two kings with him, with horses and chariots—and besieged Samaria. The thirty-two kings with him (אִתּוֹ) were vassals of Benhadad, rulers of different cities and the territory belonging to them, just as in Joshua's time almost every city of Canaan had its king; they were therefore bound to follow the army of Benhadad with their troops.—Vers. 2 sqq. During the siege Benhadad sent messengers into the city to Ahab with this demand: "Thy silver and thy gold are mine, and the best of thy wives and thy sons are mine;" and Ahab answered with pusillanimity: "According to thy word, my lord king, I and all that is mine are thine." Benhadad was made still more audacious by this submissiveness, and sent messengers the second time with the following notice (ver. 6): "Yea, if I send my servants to thee to-morrow at this time, and they search thy house and thy servants' houses, all that is the pleasure of thine eyes they will put into their hands and take." כִּי אִם does not mean "only = certainly" here (Ewald, § 356, *b*), for there is neither a negative clause nor an oath, but אִם signifies *if* and כִּי introduces the statement, as in ver. 5; so that it is only in the repetition of the כִּי that the emphasis lies, which can be expressed by *yea*. The words of Ahab in ver. 9 show unquestionably that Benhadad demanded more the second time than the first. The words of the first demand, "Thy silver and thy gold," etc., were ambiguous. According to ver. 5, Benhadad meant that Ahab should give him all this; and Ahab had probably understood him as meaning that he was to give him what he required, in order to purchase peace; but Benhadad had, no doubt, from the very first required an unconditional surrender at discretion. He expresses this very clearly in the second demand, since he announces to Ahab the plunder of his palace and also of the palaces of his nobles. כָּל־מַחְמַד עֵינֶיךָ, all thy costly treasures. It was from this second demand that Ahab first perceived what Benhadad's intention had been; he therefore laid the matter before the elders of the land, *i.e.* the king's counsellors, ver. 7: "Mark and see that this man seeketh evil," *i.e.* that he is aiming at our ruin, since he is not contented with the first demand, which I did not refuse him.—Ver. 8. The elders and all the people, *i.e.* the citizens of Samaria, advised that his demand should not be granted. אַל־תִּשְׁמַע וְלֹא תאבֶה, "hearken not (to him), and thou wilt not be willing" (וְלֹא is stronger than אַל; yet compare Ewald, § 350, *a*); whereupon Ahab sent the messengers away with this answer, that he would submit to the first demand, but that the second he could not grant. —Ver. 10. Benhadad then attempted to overawe the weak-minded Ahab by strong threats, sending fresh messengers to threaten him with the destruction of the city, and confirming it by a solemn oath: "The gods do so to me—if the dust of Samaria should suffice for the hollow hands of all the people that are in my train." The meaning of this threat was probably that he would reduce the city to ashes, so that scarcely a handful of dust should be left; for his army was so powerful and numerous, that the rubbish of the city would not suffice for every one to fill his hand. —Ver. 11. Ahab answered this loud boasting with the proverb: "Let not him that girdeth himself boast as he that looseneth the girdle," equivalent to the Latin, *ne triumphum canas ante victoriam.* —Ver. 12. After this reply of Ahab, Benhadad gave command to attack the city, while he was drinking with his kings in the booths. סֻכּוֹת are booths made of branches, twigs, and shrubs, such as are still erected in the East for kings and generals in the place of tents (*vid.* Rosenmüller, *A. u. N. Morgenl.* iii. pp. 198–9). שִׂימוּ: take your places against the city, *sc.* to storm it (for שִׂים in the sense of arranging the army for battle, see 1 Sam. xi. 11 and Job i. 17); not *οἰκοδομήσατε χάρακα* (LXX.), or place the siege train.—Vers. 13, 14. While the Syrians were preparing for the attack, a prophet came to Ahab and told him that Jehovah would deliver this great multitude (of the enemy) into his hand that day, "that thou mayest know that I am Jehovah," and that through the retainers of the governors of the provinces (שָׂרֵי הַמְּדִינוֹת, who had fled to Samaria), *i.e.* by a small and weak host. In the appearance of the prophet in Samaria mentioned here and in vers. 28 and 35 sqq. there is no such irreconcilable contradiction to ch. xviii. 4, 22, and xix. 10, as Thenius maintains; it simply shows that the persecution of the prophets by Jezebel had somewhat abated, and therefore Elijah's labour had not remained without fruit. מִי יֶאְסֹר הַמ׳, who shall open the battle? אָסַר answers to the German *anfädeln* (to string, unite; Eng. *join* battle—Tr.); cf. 2 Chron. xiii. 3.—Vers. 15, 16. Ahab then mustered his fighting men: there were 232 servants of the provincial governors; and the rest of the people, all the children of Israel, *i.e.* the whole of the Israelitish fighting men that were in Samaria (הַחַיִל, ver. 19), amounted to 7000 men. And at noon, when Benhadad and his thirty-two auxiliary kings were intoxicated at a carousal in the booths (שֹׁתֶה שִׁכּוֹר as in ch. xvi. 9), he ordered his men to advance, with the servants of the provincial governors taking the lead. The 7000 men are not to be regarded as the 7000 mentioned in ch. xix. 18, who had not bowed their knee before Baal, as Rashi supposes, although the sameness in the numbers is apparently not accidental; but in both cases the number of the covenant people existing in Israel is indicated, though in ch. xix. 18 the 7000 constitute the ἐκλογή of the true Israel, whereas in the verse before us they are merely the fighting men whom the Lord had left to Ahab for the defence of his kingdom.—Vers. 17, 18. When Benhadad was informed of the advance of these fighting men, in his drunken arrogance he ordered them to be taken alive, whether they came with peaceable or hostile intent.—Vers. 19, 20. But they—the servants of the governors at the head, and the rest of the army behind—smote every one his man, so that the Aramæans fled, and Benhadad, pursued by the Israelites, escaped on a horse with some of the cavalry. וּפָרָשִׁים is in apposition to בֶּן־הֲדַד, "he escaped, and horsemen," *sc.* escaped with him, *i.e.* some of the horsemen of his retinue, whilst the king of Israel, going out of the city, smote horses and chariots of the enemy, who were not prepared for this sally of the besieged, and completely defeated them.—Ver. 22. After this victory the prophet came to Ahab again, warning him to be upon his guard, for at the turn of the year, *i.e.* the next spring (see at 2 Sam. xi. 1), the Syrian king would make war upon him once more.

Vers. 23–34. THE SECOND VICTORY.—Vers. 23, 24. The servants (ministers) of Benhadad persuaded their lord to enter upon a fresh campaign, attributing the defeat they had sustained to two causes, which could be set aside, viz. to the supposed nature of the gods of Israel, and to the position occupied by the vassal-kings in the army. The gods of Israel were mountain gods: when fighting with them upon the mountains, the Syrians had had to fight against and succumb to the power of these gods, whereas on the plain they would conquer, because the power of these gods did not reach so far. This notion concerning the God of Israel the Syrians drew, according to their ethnical religious ideas, from the fact that the sacred places of this God—not only the temple at Jerusalem upon Moriah, but also the altars of the high places—were erected upon mountains; since heathenism really had its mountain deities, *i.e.* believed in gods who lived upon mountains and protected and conducted all that took place upon them (cf. Dougtæi *Analect.* ss. i. 178, 179; Deyling, *Observv.* ss. iii. pp. 97 sqq.; Winer, *bibl. R. W.* i. p. 154), and in Syrophœnicia even mountains themselves had divine honours paid to them (*vid.* Movers, *Phöniz.* i. p. 667 sqq.). The servants of Benhadad were at any rate so far right, that they attributed their defeat to the assistance which God had given to His people Israel; and were only wrong in regarding the God of Israel as a local deity, whose power did not extend beyond the mountains. They also advised their lord (ver. 24) to remove the kings in his army from their position, and appoint governors in their stead (פַּחוֹת, see ch. x. 15). The vassal-kings had most likely not shown the desired self-sacrifice for the cause of their superior in the war. And, lastly (ver. 25), they advised the king to raise his army to its former strength, and then carry on the war in the plain. "Number thyself an army, like the army which has fallen from thee." מֵאוֹתָךְ, "from with thee," rendered correctly *de tuis* in the Vulgate, at least so far as the sense is concerned (for the form see Ewald, § 264, *b*). But these prudently-devised measures were to be of no avail to the Syrians; for they were to learn that the God of Israel was not a limited mountain-god.—Ver. 26. With the new year (see ver. 22) Benhadad advanced to Aphek again to fight against Israel. *Aphek* is neither the city of that name in the tribe of Asher (Josh. xix. 30 and xiii. 4), nor that on the mountains of Judah (Josh. xv. 53), but the city in the plain of Jezreel not far from Endor (1 Sam. xxix. 1 compared with xxviii. 4); since Benhadad had resolved that this time he would fight against Israel in the plain.—Ver. 27. The Israelites, mustered and provided for (כָּלְכְּלוּ: supplied with ammunition and provisions), marched to meet them, and encamped before them "like two little separate flocks of goats" (*i.e.* severed from the great herd of cattle). They had probably encamped upon slopes of the mountains by the plain of Jezreel, where they looked like two miserable flocks of goats in contrast with the Syrians who filled the land.—Ver. 28. Then the man of God (the prophet mentioned in vers. 13 and 22) came again to Ahab with the word of God: "Because the Syrians have said Jehovah is a mountain-God and not a God of the valleys, I will give this great multitude into thy hand, that ye may know that I am Jehovah."—Vers. 29, 30. After seven days the battle was fought. The Israelites smote the Syrians, a hundred thousand men in one day; and when the rest fled to Aphek, into the city, the wall fell upon twenty-seven thousand men, *ἵνα δὲ κακεῖνοι καὶ οὗτοι μάθωσιν, ὡς θεήλατος ἡ πληγή* (Theodoret). The flying Syrians had probably some of them climbed the wall of the city to offer resistance to the Israelites in pursuit, and some of them sought to defend themselves by taking shelter behind it. And during the conflict, through the special interposition of God, the wall fell and buried the Syrians who were there. The cause of the fall is not given. Thenius assumes that it was undermined, in order to remove all idea of any miraculous working of the omnipotence of God. Benhadad himself fled into the city "room to room," *i.e.* from one room to another (cf. ch. xxii. 25, 2 Chron. xviii. 24).—Vers. 31, 32. In this extremity his servants made the proposal to him, that trusting in the generosity of the kings of Israel, they should go and entreat Ahab to show favour to him. They clothed themselves in mourning apparel, and put ropes on their necks, as a sign of absolute surrender, and went to Ahab, praying for the life of their king. And Ahab felt so flattered by the fact that his powerful opponent was obliged to come and entreat his favour in this humble manner, that he gave him his life, without considering how a similar act on the part of Saul had been blamed by the Lord (1 Sam. xv. 9 sqq.). "Is he still alive? . He is my brother!" was his answer to Benhadad's servants.—Ver. 33. And they laid hold of these words of Ahab as a good omen (יְנַחֲשׁוּ), and hastened and bade him explain (*i.e.* bade him quickly explain); הֲמִמֶּנּוּ, whether (it had been uttered) from himself, *i.e.* whether he had said it with all his heart (Maurer), and said, "Benhadad is thy brother." The *ἀπ. λεγ.* חָלַט, related to חָלַץ, *exuere*, signifies *abstrahere, nudare*, then figuratively, *aliquid facere nude, i.e. sine prætextu*, or *aliquid nude, i.e. sine fuco atque ambagibus testari, confirmare* (cf. Fürst, *Concord.* p. 398); then in the Talmud, to give an explanation (*vid.* Ges. *thes.* p. 476). This is perfectly applicable here, so that there is no necessity to alter the text, even if we thereby obtained a better meaning than Thenius with his explanation, "they tore it out of him," which he takes to be equivalent to "they laid hold of him by his word" (!!). Ahab thereupon ordered Benhadad to come and get up into his chariot.—Ver. 34. Benhadad, in order to keep Ahab in this favourable mood, promised to give him back at once the cities which his father had taken away from Ahab's father, and said, "Thou mayest make thyself roads in Damascus, as my father made in Samaria." There is no account of any war between Omri and Benhadad I.; it is simply stated in ch. xv. 20 that Benhadad I. had taken away several cities in Galilee from the Israelites during the reign of Baasha. This cannot be the war intended here, however, not indeed because of the expression מֵאֵת אָבִיךָ, since אָב might certainly be taken in a broader sense as referring to Baasha as an ancestor of Ahab, but chiefly on account of the statement that Benhadad had made himself roads in Samaria. This points to a war between Omri and Benhadad, after the building of Samaria into the capital of the kingdom, of which no account has been preserved. שִׂים חֻצוֹת לוֹ, "to make himself roads," cannot be understood as referring either to fortifications and military posts, or to roads for cattle and free pasturage in the Syrian kingdom, since Samaria and Damascus were cities; nor can it signify the establishment of custom-houses, but only the clearing of portions of the city for the purpose of trade and free intercourse (Cler., Ges., etc.), or for the establishment of bazaars, which would occupy a whole street (Böttcher, Thenius; see also Movers, *Phönizier*, ii. 3, p. 135).—"And I," said Ahab, "will let thee go upon a covenant" (a treaty on oath), and then made a covenant with him, giving him both life and liberty. Before וַאֲנִי we must supply in thought וַיֹּאמֶר אַחְאָב. This thoroughly impolitic proceeding on the part of Ahab arose not merely from a natural and inconsiderate generosity and credulity of mind (G. L. Bauer, Thenius), but from an unprincipled weakness, vanity, and blindness. To let a cruel and faithless foe go unpunished, was not only the greatest harshness to his own subjects, but open opposition to God, who had announced to him the victory, and delivered the enemy of His people into his hand.[1] Even if Ahab had no express command from God to put Benhadad to death, as Saul had in 1 Sam. xv. 3, it was his duty to punish this bitter foe of Israel with death, if only to secure quiet for his own subjects; as it was certainly to be foreseen that Benhadad would not keep the treaty which had been wrung from him by force, as was indeed very speedily proved (see ch. xxii. 1).

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[1] Clericus is correct in the explanation which he has given: "Although, therefore, this act of Ahab had all the appearance of clemency, it was not an act of true clemency, which ought not to be shown towards violent aggressors, who if released will do much more injury than before, as Benhadad really did. God had given the victory to Ahab, and delivered the guilty king into his hands, that he might inflict punishment upon him, not that he might treat him kindly. And Ahab, who had allowed so many prophets to be slain by his wife Jezebel, had no great clemency at other times."

Vers. 35–43. *The verdict of God upon Ahab's conduct towards Benhadad.*—Vers. 35, 36. A disciple of the prophets received instructions from God, to announce to the king that God would punish him for letting Benhadad go, and to do this, as Nathan had formerly done in the case of David (2 Sam. xii. 1 sqq.), by means of a symbolical action, whereby the king was led to pronounce sentence upon himself. The disciple of the prophets said to his companion, " in the word of Jehovah," *i.e.* by virtue of a revelation from God (see at ch. xiii. 2), " Smite me ;" and when the friend refused to smite him, he announced to him that because of this disobedience to the voice of the Lord, after his departure from him a lion would meet him and smite him, *i.e.* would kill him ; a threat which was immediately fulfilled. This occurrence shows with how severe a punishment all opposition to the commandments of God to the prophets was followed, as a warning for others ; just as in the similar occurrence in ch. xiii. 24.—Ver. 27. The disciple of the prophets then asked another to smite him, and he smote him, " smiting and wounding," *i.e.* so that he not only smote, but also wounded him (*vid.* Ewald, § 280, *a*). He wished to be smitten and wounded, not to disguise himself, or that he might be able to appeal loudly to the king for help to obtain his. rights, as though he had suffered some wrong (Ewald), nor merely to assume the deceptive appearance of a warrior returning from the battle (Thenius), but to show to Ahab symbolically what he had to expect from Benhadad whom he had released (C. a Lap., Calm., etc.).—Ver. 38. With these wounds he placed himself in the king's path, and disguised himself (יִתְחַפֵּשׂ as in 1 Sam. xxviii. 8) by a bandage over his eyes. אֲפֵר does not mean ashes (Syr., Vulg., Luth., etc.), but corresponds to the Chaldee מַעְפְּרָא, head-band, τελαμών (LXX.).—Vers. 39, 40. When the king passed by, he cried out to him and related the following fictitious tale : He had gone to the war, and a man had come aside to him (סוּר as in Ex. iii. 3, Judg. xiv. 8, etc.), and had given a man (a prisoner) into his care with this command, that he was to watch him, and if he should be missing he was to answer for his life with his own life, or to pay a talent of silver (as a punishment). The rest may be easily imagined,. namely the request to be saved from this punishment. Ahab answered (ver. 40), כֵּן מִשְׁפָּטֶךָ, "thus thy sentence, thou hast decided," *i.e.* thou hast pronounced thine own sentence, and must endure the punishment stated.—Vers. 41, 42. Then the disciple of the prophets drew the bandage quickly from his eyes, so that the king recognised him as a prophet, and announced to him the word of the Lord: "Because thou hast let go out of thy hand the man of my ban (*i.e.* Benhadad, who has fallen under my ban), thy life shall stand for his life, and thy people for his people," *i.e.* the destruction to which Benhadad was devoted will fall upon thee and thy people. The expression אִישׁ־חֶרְמִי (man of my ban) showed Ahab clearly enough what ought to have been done with Benhadad. A person on whom the ban was pronounced was to be put to death (Lev. xxvii. 29).—Ver 43. The king therefore went home, and returned sullen (סַר, from סָרַר) and morose to Samaria.

CHAP. XXI. THE MURDER AND ROBBERY OF NABOTH.

After these events Ahab was seized with such a desire for a vineyard which was situated near his palace at Jezreel, that when Naboth, the owner of the vineyard, refused to part with his paternal inheritance, he became thoroughly dejected, until his wife Jezebel paved the way for the forcible seizure of the desired possession by the shameful execution of Naboth (vers. 1–15). But when Ahab was preparing to take possession of the vineyard, Elijah came to meet him with the announcement, that both he and his wife would be visited by the Lord with a bloody death for this murder and robbery, and that his idolatry would be punished with the extermination of all his house (vers. 16–26). Ahab was so affected by this, that he humbled himself before God; whereupon the Lord told Elijah, that the threatened judgment should not burst upon his house till after Ahab's death (vers. 27–29).

Vers. 1–15.—Ahab wanted to obtain possession of the vineyard of Naboth, which was in Jezreel (אֲשֶׁר refers to כֶּרֶם), near the palace of the king, either in exchange for another vineyard or for money, that he might make a vegetable garden of it. From the fact that Ahab is called the king of Samaria we may infer that Jezreel, the present *Zerin* (see at Josh. xix. 18), was only a summer residence of the king.—Ver. 3. Naboth refused to part with the vineyard, because it was the inheritance of his fathers, that is to say, on religious grounds (חָלִילָה לִּי מֵיהוָה), because the sale of a paternal inheritance was forbidden in the law (Lev. xxv. 23–28; Num. xxxvi. 7 sqq.). He was therefore not merely at liberty as a personal right to refuse the king's proposal, but bound by the commandment of God.—Ver. 4. Instead of respecting this tender feeling of shrinking from the transgression of the law and desisting from his coveting, Ahab went home, *i.e.* to Samaria (cf. ver. 8); sullen and morose (סַר וְזָעֵף as in ch. xx. 43), lay down upon his bed, turned his face (viz. to the wall; cf. 2 Kings xx. 2)—"after the manner of sorrowful persons, who shrink from and refuse all conversation, and even the sight of others" (Seb. Schmidt)—and did not eat. This childish mode of giving expression to his displeasure at Naboth's refusal to comply with his wish, shows very clearly that Ahab was a man sold under sin (ver. 20), who only wanted the requisite energy to display the wickedness of his heart in vigorous action.—Vers. 5–7. When Jezebel learned the cause of Ahab's ill-humour, she said to him, "Thou, dost thou now exercise royal authority over Israel?" אַתָּה is placed first for the sake of emphasis, and the sentence is to be taken as an ironical question, as it has been by the LXX. "I (if thou hast not courage enough to act) will procure thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite."—Vers. 8, 9. The shameless woman then wrote a letter in the name of Ahab, sealed it below with the royal seal, which probably bore the king's signature and was stamped upon the writing instead of signing the name, as is done at the present day among Arabs, Turks, and Persians (*vid.* Paulsen, *Reg. der Morgenl.* p. 295 sqq.), to give it the character of a royal command (cf. Esther viii. 13, Dan. vi. 17), and sent this letter (the *Chethîb* הַסְּפָרִים is correct, and the *Keri* has arisen from a misunderstanding) to the elders and nobles of his town (*i.e.* the members of the magistracy, Deut. xvi. 18), who lived near Naboth, and therefore had an opportunity to watch his mode of life, and appeared to be the most suitable persons to institute the charge that was to be brought against him. The letter ran thus: "Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth at the head of the people, and set two worthless men opposite to him, that they may give evidence against him: Thou hast blasphemed God and king; and lead him out and stone him, that he may die." Jezebel ordered the fasting for a sign, as though some public crime or heavy load of guilt rested upon the city, for which it was necessary that it should humble itself before God (1 Sam. vii. 6). The intention was, that at the very outset the appearance of justice should be given to the legal process about to be instituted in the eyes of all the citizens, and the stamp of veracity impressed upon the crime of which Naboth was to be accused. הוֹשִׁיבוּ . . . בְּרֹאשׁ הָעָם, "*seat* him at the head of the people," *i.e.* bring him to the court of justice as a defendant before all the people. The expression may be explained from the fact, that a sitting of the elders was appointed for judicial business, in which Naboth and the witnesses who were to accuse him of blasphemy took part *seated.* To preserve the appearance of justice, two witnesses were appointed, according to the law in Deut. xvii. 6, 7, xix. 15, Num. xxxv. 30; but worthless men, as at the trial of Jesus (Matt. xxvi. 60). בָּרֵךְ אֱלֹהִים, to bless God, *i.e.* to bid Him farewell, to dismiss Him, as in Job ii. 9, equivalent to blaspheming God. God and king are mentioned together, like God and prince in Ex. xxii. 27, to make it possible to accuse Naboth of transgressing this law, and to put him to death as a blasphemer of God, according to Deut. xiii. 11 and xvii. 5, where the punishment of stoning is awarded to idolatry as a practical denial of God. Blaspheming the king is not to be taken as a second crime to be added to the blasphemy of God; but blaspheming the king, as the visible representative of God, was *eo ipso* also blaspheming God.—Vers. 11–13. The elders of Jezreel executed this command without delay; a striking proof both of deep moral corruption and of slavish fear of the tyranny of the ruthless queen.—Vers. 14, 15. When the report of Naboth's execution was brought to her, she called upon Ahab to take possession of his vineyard (רֵשׁ = רַשׁ, Deut. ii. 24). As Naboth's sons were put to death at the same time, according to 2 Kings ix. 26, the king was able to confiscate his property; not, indeed, on any rule laid down in the Mosaic law, but according to a principle involved in the very idea of high treason. Since, for example, in the case of blasphemy the property of the criminal was forfeited to the Lord as *cherem* (Deut. xiii. 16), the property of traitors was regarded as forfeited to the king.

Vers. 16–26. But when Ahab went down to Jezreel to take possession of the vineyard of Naboth, Elijah came to meet him by the command of God, with the word of the Lord, "Hast thou murdered and also taken possession?" The question served to sharpen his conscience, since Ahab was obliged to admit the fact. אֲשֶׁר בְּשֹׁמְרוֹן means "who lives at Samaria," for when Elijah came to meet him, Ahab was in Jezreel. Elijah then said to him still further: "Thus saith the Lord: In the place where the dogs have licked the blood of Naboth, will they also lick thine, yea, thy blood." גַּם אַתָּה serves as an emphatic repetition of the suffix (cf. Ges. § 121, 3). This threat was only so far fulfilled upon Ahab, from the compassion of God, and in consequence of his humbling himself under the divine judgment (vers. 27–29), that dogs licked his blood at Samaria when the carriage was washed in which he had died (ch. xxii. 38); but it was literally fulfilled in the case of his son Joram, whose corpse was cast into Naboth's piece of ground (2 Kings ix. 25, 26).—Ver. 20. Ahab answered, "Hast thou found me (met with me), O mine enemy?" (not, hast thou ever found me thine enemy?—Vulg., Luth.) *i.e.* dost thou come to meet me again, mine enemy? He calls Elijah his enemy, to take the sting from the prophet's threat as an utterance caused by personal enmity. But Elijah fearlessly replied, "I have found (thee), because thou sellest thyself to do evil in the eyes of the Lord." He then announced to him, in vers. 21, 22, the extermination of his house, and to Jezebel, as the principal sinner, the most ignominious end (ver. 23). הִתְמַכֵּר לַעֲשׂוֹת הָרַע, to sell one's self to do evil, *i.e.* to give one's self to evil so as to have no will of one's own, to make one's self the slave of evil (cf. ver. 25, 2 Kings xvii. 17). The consequence of this is *πεπρᾶσθαι ὑπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν* (Rom. vii. 14), sin exercising unlimited power over the man who gives himself up to it as a slave. For vers. 21, 22, see ch. xiv. 10, 11, xv. 29, 30, xvi. 3, 12, 13. The threat concerning Jezebel (ver. 23) was literally fulfilled, according to 2 Kings ix. 30 sqq. חֵל, written defectively for חֵיל, as in 2 Sam. xx. 15, is properly the open space by the town-wall, *pomœrium.* Instead of בְּחֵל we have בְּחֵלֶק in the repetition of this threat in 2 Kings ix. 10, 36, 37, and consequently Thenius and others propose to alter the חֵל here. But there is no necessity for this, as בְּחֵלֶק, on the portion, *i.e.* the town-land, of Jezreel (not, in the field at Jezreel), is only a more general epithet denoting the locality, and חֵל is proved to be the original word by the LXX.—Vers. 25 and 26 contain a reflection on the part of the historian concerning Ahab's ungodly conduct, whereby he brought such an ignominious end upon himself and his house. רַק לֹא הָיָה וגו', "only there has not been (one) like Ahab," *i.e.* there was no one else like Ahab, "who sold himself," etc. הֵסַתָּה for הֵסִיתָה, from סוּת, to entice, to seduce or lead astray (cf. Ewald, § 114, *a*, and Ges. § 72, Anm. 6). וַיַּתְעֵב, and he acted abominably. *Amorites:* for Canaanites, as in Gen. xv. 16, etc.

Vers. 27–29. This terrible threat made such an impression upon Ahab, that he felt deep remorse, and for a time at least was sincerely penitent. Rending the clothes, putting on the mourning garment of hair (שַׂק), and fasting, are frequently mentioned as external signs of humiliation before God or of deep mourning on account of sin. יְהַלֵּךְ אַט, he walked about lightly (slowly), like one in deep trouble. This repentance was neither hypocritical, nor purely external; but it was sincere even if it was not lasting and produced no real conversion. For the Lord Himself acknowledged it to be humiliation before Him (ver. 29), and said to Elijah, that because of it He would not bring the threatened calamity upon Ahab's house in his own lifetime, but only in the days of his son. אָבִי for אָבִיא, as in ver. 21.

CHAP. XXII. WAR OF AHAB AND JEHOSHAPHAT AGAINST THE SYRIANS, AND DEATH OF AHAB. REIGNS OF JEHOSHAPHAT OF JUDAH AND AHAZIAH OF ISRAEL.

Vers. 1–40. Allied Campaign of Ahab and Jehoshaphat against the Syrians at Ramoth, and Death of Ahab (compare 2 Chron. xviii. 2–34).—Ver. 1. "And they rested three years; there was no war between Aram and Israel." יָשַׁב here is to keep quiet, to undertake nothing, as in Judg. v. 17, etc. The subject to וַיֵּשְׁבוּ is Aram and Israel mentioned in the second clause. The length of time given here points back to the end of the war described in ch. xx.—Vers. 2–4. In the third year (not necessarily "towards the end of it," as Thenius supposes, for Jehoshaphat's visit preceded the renewal of the war) Jehoshaphat visited the king of Israel, with whom he had already formed a marriage alliance by marrying his son to Ahab's daughter (2 Chron. xviii. 1; 2 Kings viii. 18). Ahab then said to his servants that the king of Syria had kept the city of *Ramoth* in Gilead (probably situated on the site of the present *Szalt:* see at

Deut. iv. 43), which he ought to have given up, according to the conditions of the peace in ch. xx. 34, and asked Jehoshaphat whether he would go with him to the war against Ramoth, which the latter promised to do. "I as thou, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses;" *i.e.* I am at thy service with the whole of my military power. In the place of the last words we have therefore in the Chronicles וְעִמְּךָ בַּמִּלְחָמָה, "I am with thee in the war," *i.e.* I will assist thee in the war.—Vers. 5, 6. But as Jehoshaphat wished also to inquire the word of the Lord concerning the war, Ahab gathered together about 400 prophets, who all predicted as out of one mouth a prosperous result to the campaign. These 400 prophets are neither the 400 prophets of Asherah who had not appeared upon Carmel when Elijah was there (ch. xviii. 19, 20), nor prophets of Baal, as some of the earlier commentators supposed, since Ahab could not inquire of them אֶת־דְּבַר יְהוָֹה. On the other hand, they were not "true prophets of Jehovah and disciples of the prophets" (Cler., Then.), but prophets of the Jehovah worshipped under the image of an ox, who practised prophesying as a trade without any call from God, and even if they were not in the pay of the idolatrous kings of Israel, were at any rate in their service. For Jehoshaphat did not recognise them as genuine prophets of Jehovah, but inquired whether there was not such a prophet still in existence (ver. 7), that they might inquire the will of the Lord of him (מֵאוֹתוֹ).—Ver. 8. Ahab then named to him one, but one whom he hated, because he never prophesied good concerning him, but only evil,[1] namely, *Micah* the son of Jimlah. Josephus and the Rabbins suppose him to have been the prophet, whose name is not given, who had condemned Ahab in the previous war for setting Benhadad at liberty (ch. xx. 35 sqq.). But there is no foundation for this, and it is mere conjecture. At any rate, Ahab had already come to know Micah as a prophet of evil, and, as is evident from ver. 26, had had him imprisoned on account of an unwelcome prophecy. Ahab's dislike to this prophet had its root in the belief, which was connected with heathen notions of prophecy and conjuring, that the prophets stood in such a relation to the Deity that the latter necessarily fulfilled their will; a belief which had arisen from the fact that the predictions of true prophets always came to pass (see at Num. xxii. 6 and 17).

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[1] Just as Agamemnon says to Calchas in *Il.* iv. 106: μάντι κακῶν, οὐ πώποτέ μοι τὸ κρήγυον εἶπας, κ.τ.λ.

—Ver. 9. By Jehoshaphat's desire, Ahab nevertheless sent a chamberlain (סָרִיס; see at 1 Sam. viii. 15 and Gen. xxxvii. 36) to fetch Micah (מַהֲרָה, bring quickly).—Vers. 10–12. In the meantime the prophets of the calves continued to prophesy success before the two kings, who sat upon thrones "clothed in robes," *i.e.* in royal attire, upon a floor in front of the gate of Samaria. גֹּרֶן, a threshing-floor, *i.e.* a levelled place in the open air. In order to give greater effect to their announcement, one of them, named *Zedekiyah* the son of Cnaanah, made himself iron horns, probably iron spikes held upon the head (Thenius), and said, "With these wilt thou thrust down Aram even to destruction." This symbolical action was an embodiment of the figure used by Moses in the blessing of Joseph (Deut. xxxiii. 17): "Buffalo horns are his (Joseph's) horns, with them he thrusts down nations" (*vid.* Hengstenberg, *Beitrr.* ii. p. 131), and was intended to transfer to Ahab in the case before them that splendid promise which applied to the tribe of Ephraim. But the pseudo-prophet overlooked the fact that the fulfilment of the whole of the blessing of Moses was dependent upon fidelity to the Lord. All the rest of the prophets adopted the same tone, saying, "Go to Ramoth, and prosper," *i.e.* and thou wilt prosper. (On this use of two imperatives see Ges. § 130, 2). —Vers. 13, 14. The messenger who fetched Micah tried on the way to persuade him to prophesy success to the king as the other prophets had done; but Micah replied with a solemn oath, that he would only speak what Jehovah said to him.

Vers. 15–28. *Micah's prophecy concerning the war, and his testimony against the lying prophets.*—Vers. 15, 16. When Micah had come into the presence of the king, he replied to his question, "Shall we go against Ramoth?" etc., in just the same words as the pseudo-prophets, to show the king how he would speak if he were merely guided by personal considerations, as the others were. From the verbal agreement in his reply, and probably also from the tone in which he spoke, Ahab perceived that his words were ironical, and adjured him to speak only truth in the name of Jehovah. Micah then told him what he had seen in the spirit (ver. 17): "I saw all Israel scatter itself upon the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd;" and then added the word of the Lord: "These have no master; let them return every one to his house in peace." That is to say, Ahab would fall in the war against Ramoth in Gilead, and his army scatter itself without a leader upon the mountains of Gilead, and then every one would return home, without being pursued and slain by the enemy. Whilst Zedekiyah attempted to give greater emphasis to his prophecy by symbolically transferring to Ahab's enterprise the success predicted by Moses, Micah, on the other hand, showed to the king out of the law what would really take place in the intended war, namely, that very state of things which Moses before his departure sought to avert from Israel, by the prayer that the Lord would set a man over the congregation to lead them out and in, that the congregation might not become as sheep that have no shepherd (Num. xxvii. 16, 17).—Ver. 18. But although Ahab had asked for a true word of the Lord, yet he endeavoured to attribute the unfavourable prophecy to Micah's personal enmity, saying to Jehoshaphat, "Did I not tell thee that he prophesies nothing good concerning me, but only evil (misfortune)?"—Vers. 19 sqq. Micah was not led astray, however, by this, but disclosed to him by a further revelation the hidden ground of the false prophecy of his 400 prophets. לָכֵן שְׁמַע וגו׳, "therefore, *sc.* because thou thinkest so, hear the word of Jehovah: I saw the Lord sit upon His throne, and all the army of heaven stand around Him (עֹמֵד עָלָיו as in Gen. xviii. 8, etc.) on His right hand and on His left. And the Lord said, Who will persuade Ahab to go up and fall at Ramoth in Gilead? and one spake so, the other so; and the spirit came forth (from the ranks of the rest), stood before Jehovah, and said, I will persuade him. . . I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And He (Jehovah) said, Persuade, and thou wilt also be able; go forth and do so. And now Jehovah has put a lying spirit into the mouth of all his prophets; but Jehovah (Himself) has spoken evil (through me) concerning thee." The vision described by Micah was not merely a subjective drapery introduced by the prophet, but a simple communication of the real inward vision by which the fact had been revealed to him, that the prophecy of those 400 prophets was inspired by a lying spirit. The spirit (הָרוּחַ) which inspired these prophets as a lying spirit is neither Satan, nor any evil spirit whatever, but, as the definite article and the whole of the context show, the personified spirit of prophecy, which is only so far a *πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον τῆς πλάνης* (Zech. xiii. 2; 1 John iv. 6) and under the influence of Satan as it works as רוּחַ שֶׁקֶר in accordance with the will of God. For even the predictions of the false prophets, as we may see from the passage before us, and also from Zech. xiii. 2 and the scriptural teaching in other passages concerning the spiritual principle of evil, were not mere inventions of human reason and fancy; but the false prophets as well as the true were governed by a supernatural spiritual principle, and, according to divine appointment, were under the influence of the evil spirit in the service of falsehood, just as the true prophets were moved by the Holy Spirit in the service of the Lord. The manner in which the supernatural influence of the lying spirit upon the false prophets is brought out in Micah's vision is, that the spirit of prophecy (רוח הנבואה) offers itself to deceive Ahab as רוּחַ שֶׁקֶר in the false prophets. Jehovah sends this spirit, inasmuch as the deception of Ahab has been inflicted upon him as a judgment of God for his unbelief. But there is no statement here to the effect that this lying spirit proceeded from Satan, because the object of the prophet was simply to bring out the working of God in the deception practised upon Ahab by his prophets.—The words of Jehovah, "Persuade Ahab, thou wilt be able," and "Jehovah has put a lying spirit," etc., are not to be understood as merely expressing the permission of God, as the fathers and the earlier theologians suppose. According to the Scriptures, God does work evil, but without therefore willing it and bringing forth sin. The prophet's view is founded upon this thought: Jehovah has ordained that Ahab, being led astray by a prediction of his prophets inspired by the spirit of lies, shall enter upon the war, that he may find therein the punishment of his ungodliness. As he would not listen to the word of the Lord in the mouth of His true servants, God had given him up (*παρέδωκεν*, Rom. i. 24, 26, 28) in his unbelief to the working of the spirits of lying. But that this did not destroy the freedom of the human will is evident from the expression תְּפַתֶּה, "thou canst *persuade* him," and still more clearly from גַּם תּוּכָל, "thou wilt also be able," since they both presuppose the possibility of resistance to temptation on the part of man.

Zedekiah was so enraged at this unveiling of the spirit of lying by which the pseudo-prophets were impelled, that he smote Micah upon the cheek, and said (ver. 24): "Where did the Spirit of Jehovah depart from me, to speak to thee?" To אֵי־זֶה the Chronicles add as an explanation, הַדֶּרֶךְ: "by what way had he gone from me?" (cf. 2 Kings iii. 8, and Ewald, § 326, *a*.) Zedekiah was conscious that he had not invented his prophecy himself, and therefore it was that he rose up with such audacity against Micah; but he only proved that it was not the Spirit of God which inspired him. If he had been inspired by the Spirit of the Lord, he would not have thought it necessary to try and give effect to his words by rude force, but he would have left the defence of his cause quietly to the Lord, as Micah did, who calmly replied to the zealot thus (ver. 25): "Thou wilt see it (that the Spirit of Jehovah had departed from thee) on the day when thou shalt go from chamber to chamber to hide thyself" (הֵחָבֵה for הֵחָבֵא, see Ges. § 75, Anm. 21). This was probably fulfilled at the close of the war, when Jezebel or the friends of Ahab made the pseudo-prophets suffer for the calamitous result; although there is nothing said about this in our history, which confines itself to the main facts.—Vers. 26, 27. But Ahab had Micah taken back to Amon the commander of the city, and to Joash the king's son, with the command to put him in prison and to feed him with bread and water of affliction, till he came safe back (בְּשָׁלוֹם) from the war. From the expression הֲשִׁיבֻהוּ, "lead him back," it evidently follows that Micah had been fetched from the commander of the city, who had no doubt kept him in custody, as the city-prison was probably in his house. The opposite cannot be inferred from the words "put him into the prison;" for this command, when taken in connection with what follows, simply enjoins a more severe imprisonment.—Ver. 28. In his consciousness of the divine truth of his announcement, Micah left the king with these words: "If thou come back safe, Jehovah has not spoken by me. Hear it, all ye nations." עַמִּים does not mean people, for it is only in the antique language of the Pentateuch that the word has this meaning, but nations; and Micah thereby invokes not only the persons present as witnesses of the truth of his words, but the nations generally, Israel and the surrounding nations, who were to discern the truth of his word from the events which would follow (see at Mic. i. 2).

Vers. 29–40. *The issue of the war, and death of Ahab.*—Ver. 29. Ahab, disregarding Micah's prophecy, went on with the expedition, and was even joined by Jehoshaphat, of whom we should have thought that, after what had occurred, he at any rate would have drawn back. He was probably deterred by false shame, however, from retracting the unconditional promise of help which he had given to Ahab, merely in consequence of a prophetic utterance, which Ahab had brought against his own person from Micah's subjective dislike. But Jehoshaphat narrowly escaped paying the penalty for it with his life (ver. 32), and on his fortunate return to Jerusalem had to listen to a severe reproof from the prophet Jehu in consequence (2 Chron. xix. 2).—Vers. 30, 31. And even Ahab could not throw off a certain fear of the fulfilment of Micah's prophecy. He therefore resolved to go to the battle in disguise, that he might not be recognised by the enemy. הִתְחַפֵּשׂ וָבֹא ("disguise myself and go into the battle," *i.e.* I will go into the battle in disguise): an *infin. absol.*,—a broken but strong form of expression, which is frequently used for the imperative, but very rarely for the first person of the voluntative (cf. Ewald, § 328, *c*), and which is probably employed here to express the anxiety that impelled Ahab to take so much trouble to ensure his own safety. (Luther has missed the meaning in his version; in the Chronicles, on the contrary, it is correctly given.) וְאַתָּה לְבַשׁ, "but do thou put on thy clothes." These words are not to be taken as a command, but simply in this sense: "thou mayest (canst) put on thy (royal) dress, since there is no necessity for thee to take any such precautions as I have to take." There is no ground for detecting any cunning, *vafrities*, on the part of Ahab in these words, as some of the older commentators have done, as though he wished thereby to divert the predicted evil from himself to Jehoshaphat. But we may see very clearly that Ahab had good reason to be anxious about his life, from the command of the Syrian king to the captains of his war-chariots (ver. 31) to fight chiefly against the king of Israel. We cannot infer from this, however, that Ahab was aware of the command. The measure adopted by him may be sufficiently accounted for from his fear of the fulfilment of Micah's evil prophecy, to which there may possibly have been added some personal offence that had been given on his part to the Syrian king in connection with the negotiations concerning the surrender of Ramoth, which had no doubt preceded the war. The thirty-two commanders of the war-chariots and cavalry are, no doubt, the commanders who had taken the place of the thirty-two kings (ch. xxi. 24). "Fight not against small and great, but against the king of Israel only," *i.e.* endeavour above all others to fight against the king of Israel and to slay him.—Vers. 32, 33. And when the leaders of the war-chariots saw Jehoshaphat in the battle in his royal clothes, they took him for the king of Israel (Ahab), and pressed upon him. Then Jehoshaphat cried out; and from this they perceived that he was not the king of Israel, and turned away from him. וְהֵמָּה אָמְרוּ אַךְ וגו׳, "and they thought, it is only (*i.e.* no other than) the king of Israel." יָסֻרוּ עָלָיו, "they bent upon him." Instead of this we have in the Chronicles יָסֹבּוּ עָלָיו, "they surrounded him," and Thenius proposes to alter our text to this; but there is no necessity for doing so, as סוּר also occurs in a similar sense and connection in ch. xx. 39. How far Jehoshaphat was saved by his crying out, is not precisely stated. He probably cried out to his followers to come to his aid, from which the Syrians discovered that he was not the king of Israel, whom they were in search of. The chronicler adds (ch. ii. 18, 31): "and the Lord helped him and turned them off from him;" thus believingly tracing the rescue of the king to its higher causality, though without our having any right to infer from this that Jehoshaphat cried aloud to God for help, which is not implied in the words of the Chronicles.—Ver. 34. But notwithstanding the precaution he had taken, Ahab did not escape the judgment of God. "A man drew his bow in his simplicity" (לְתֻמּוֹ as in 2 Sam. xv. 11), *i.e.* without trying to hit any particular man, "and shot the king of Israel between the skirts and the coat of mail." דְּבָקִים are "joints by which the iron thorax was attached to the hanging skirt, which covered the abdomen" (Cler.). The true coat of mail covered only the breast, to somewhere about the last rib; and below this it had an appendage (skirts) consisting of moveable joints. Between this appendage and the true coat of mail there was a groove through which the arrow passed, and, entering the abdomen, inflicted upon the king a mortal wound; so that he said to his charioteer: הֲפֹךְ יָדֶיךָ, *verte manus tuas, i.e.* turn round (cf. 2 Kings ix. 23). The *Chethîb* יָדֶיךָ (plural) is the only correct reading, since the driver held the reins in both his hands. כִּי הָחֳלֵיתִי: for I am wounded. —Ver. 35. "And the conflict ascended," *i.e.* became more violent. The use of the verb עָלָה in this sense may be accounted for on the supposition that it is founded upon the figure of a rising stream, which becomes more and more impetuous the higher it rises (*vid.* Isa. viii. 7). "And the king was stationed (*i.e.* remained or kept himself in an upright posture) upon the chariot before the Syrians," that he might not dishearten his soldiers, "and died in the evening, and poured the blood of the wounds in the middle hollow (חֵיק) of the chariot."—Ver. 36. Towards sunset the cry went through the army (הַמַּחֲנֶה, the army drawn up in battle array), "Every one into his city and into his land!"—In ver. 37 the historian shows how the word of the Lord was fulfilled in the case of Ahab. "Thus the king died and came to Samaria:" equivalent to, thus the king reached Samaria dead; and he was buried there.—Ver. 38. When they washed the chariot at the pool of Samaria, the dogs licked his blood, while the harlots were bathing (in the pool). וְהַזֹּנוֹת רָחָצוּ is a circumstantial clause, and רָחַץ means to bathe, as in Ex. ii. 5. This explanation, which is sustained by the grammar and is the only tenable one, disposes of the several arbitrary interpretations of these words, together with the emendations of the text of which Thenius is so fond. In this way was the word of the Lord through Elijah (ch. xxi. 19) and the unknown prophet (ch. xx. 42) fulfilled; also the prediction of Micah (ver. 17). Ahab had paid the penalty with his own life for sparing the life of Benhadad (ch. xx. 42), and his blood was licked up by the dogs (ch. xxi. 19). The fact that the dogs licked up the blood and the harlots were bathing in the pool, when the chariot that was stained with the blood of Ahab was being washed, is mentioned as a sign of the ignominious contempt which was heaped upon him at his death.—Vers. 39, 40. Close of Ahab's history. We have no further account of his buildings. "The ivory palace," *i.e.* the palace inlaid with ivory, he had probably built in his capital Samaria (cf. Amos iii. 15).

Vers. 41–50. Reign of Jehoshaphat of Judah.—The account of this in the books before us is a very condensed one. Beside the two campaigns in which he joined with Ahab and Joram of Israel against the Syrians and Moabites, and which are described in the history of the kingdom of Israel (ch. xxii. 1–35 and 2 Kings iii.), we have simply a short notice of his attempt to restore the trade with Ophir, and a general statement of the spirit of his reign; whereas we learn from the extract preserved in the Chronicles from the annals of the kings, that he also carried on a victorious war against the Edomites and Ammonites (2 Chron. xx.), and did a great deal to promote the spread of the knowledge of the law among his people, and to carry out the restoration of a better administration of justice, and to improve the condition of the army (2 Chron. xvii. and xix.). —Vers. 41–44, which give the age of Jehoshaphat when he ascended the throne, and the duration and character of his reign, are also found with slight deviations in 2 Chron. xx. 31–33, in the closing summary of the history of his reign.—Ver. 43. "He walked entirely in the way of his father Asa and departed not from it, to do what was well-pleasing to the Lord," whereas Asa's heart had become more estranged from the Lord in the last years of his reign (see ch. xv. 18 sqq.).—On the worship of the high places (ver. 43), see at ch. xv. 14.—Ver. 44. He maintained peace with the king of Israel, *i.e.* with every one of the Israelitish kings who were contemporaneous with him, viz. Ahab, Ahaziah, and Joram, whereas hitherto the two kingdoms had assumed an attitude of hostility towards each other. Even if this friendly bearing towards Israel was laudable in itself, Jehoshaphat went beyond the bounds of what was allowable, since he formed a marriage alliance with the house of Ahab, by letting his son Joram marry a daughter of Ahab and Jezebel (2 Chron. xviii. 1).—Ver. 45. The brave deeds (הַגְּבוּרָה) which he performed include both his efforts to strengthen his kingdom, partly by raising fortifications and organizing the military force, and partly by instructing the people in the law and improving the administration of justice (2 Chron. xvii. 7–19 and xix. 4–11), and also the wars which he waged, viz. the expeditions already mentioned.—For ver. 46 see ch. xv. 12.—Ver. 47. "There was (then) no (real) king in Edom; a vicegerent was king," *i.e.* governed the country. This remark is introduced here merely on account of what follows, namely, to show how it was that Jehoshaphat was able to attempt to restore the maritime trade with Ophir. If we observe this connection between the verse before us and what follows, we cannot infer from it, as Ewald does (*Gesch.* iii. pp. 464 and 474 sqq.), that the Edomites with Egyptian help had forced from Rehoboam both their liberty and also their right to have a king of their own blood, and had remained in this situation till Jehoshaphat completely subjugated them again. (See the remarks on ch. xi. 21, 22.) All that can be gathered from 2 Chron. xx. is, that the Edomites, in league with the Ammonites and other desert tribes, made an incursion into Judah, and therefore tried to throw off the supremacy of Judah, but did not succeed in their attempt.—Vers. 48, 49. The brief notice concerning Jehoshaphat's attempt to build Tarshish ships (for the word, see p. 150) for the voyage to Ophir is expanded in 2 Chron. xx. 36, 37, where we learn that Jehoshaphat had allied himself with Ahaziah of Israel for this purpose, and that the prophet Eliezer predicted the destruction of his ships on account of this alliance. When the ships had been broken in pieces in Eziongeber, no doubt by a storm, Ahaziah made this fresh proposal to him: "Let my people sail with thy people;" but Jehoshaphat would not. Ahaziah evidently wanted to persuade Jehoshaphat to make another attempt, after the destruction of the ships which were first built; but Jehoshaphat did not agree to it any more, because it was impossible for him, after the fulfilment of Eliezer's prediction, to expect a more favourable result. Thus the two accounts can be harmonized in a very simple manner, with the exception of the words "to go to Tarshish," which we find in the Chronicles in the place of "to go to Ophir," the reading in our text, and which sprang from an erroneous interpretation of the expression "ships of Tarshish" (see above, p. 150). The *Chethîb* עשׂר is an error of the pen for עָשָׂה (*Keri*); but נִשְׁבְּרָה (*Chethîb*) is not to be altered into נִשְׁבְּרוּ, since the construction of a singular verb with the subject following in the plural is by no means rare (*vid.* Ewald, § 317, *a*). On Eziongeber and Ophir, see at ch. ix. 26 and 28.

Vers. 51-53. REIGN OF AHAZIAH OF ISRAEL.—Ver. 51. For the *datum* "in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat," see at 2 Kings i. 17.—Vers. 52, 53. Ahaziah walked in the way of his father and his mother, who had introduced the worship of Baal into the kingdom, and in the way of Jeroboam, who had set up the calves (cf. ch. xvi. 30-33).—In ver. 53 it is again expressly added, that he adored and worshipped Baal, as in ch. xvi. 31.—With this general description of his character not only is the chapter brought to a close, but the first book of Kings also,—very unsuitably, however, since the further account of Ahaziah's reign and of his death is given in ch. i. of the following book. It would have been incomparably more suitable to commence a fresh chapter with ver. 52, and indeed to commence the second book there also.

SECOND BOOK OF THE KINGS.

CHAP. I. AHAZIAH'S ILLNESS. HIS DEATH ANNOUNCED BY ELIJAH.

AFTER the Moabites had rebelled against Israel, Ahaziah became sick in consequence of a fall through a grating in his upper room, and sent messengers to Ekron to consult the idol Baalzebub concerning the result of his illness. By the command of God, however, Elijah met the messengers on the road, and told them that the king would die (vers. 1–8). When Ahaziah sent soldiers to fetch Elijah, the messengers were miraculously slain on two successive occasions, and it was only his humiliation before the prophet which saved the third captain and his host from sharing a similar fate; whereupon Elijah went with him to the king, and repeated the threat already announced on account of his idolatry, which was very soon fulfilled (vers. 9–18).

Vers. 1–8. After the death of Ahab, Moab rebelled against Israel (ver. 1). The Moabites, who had been subjugated by David (2 Sam. viii. 2), had remained tributary to the kingdom of the ten tribes after the division of the kingdom. But when Israel was defeated by the Syrians at Ramoth in the time of Ahab, they took advantage of this defeat and the weakening of the Israelitish power in the country to the east of the Jordan to shake off the yoke of the Israelites, and very soon afterwards attempted an invasion of the kingdom of Judah, in alliance with the Edomites and other tribes of the desert, which terminated, however, in a great defeat, though it contributed to the maintenance of their independence. For further remarks, see at ch. iii. 4 sqq.—Ver. 2. Ahaziah could not do anything to subjugate the Moabites any further, since he was very soon afterwards taken grievously ill. He fell through the grating in his upper room at Samaria. הַשְּׂבָכָה, the grating, is either a window furnished with a shutter of lattice-work, or a door of lattice-work in the upper room of the palace, but hardly a grating in the floor of the *Aliyah* for the purpose of letting light into the lower rooms, as the Rabbins supposed. On account of this misfortune, Ahaziah resorted to the Ekronitish *Baalzebub* to obtain an oracle concerning the result of his illness. בַּעַל־זְבוּב, *i.e.* Fly-Baal, was not merely the "averter of swarms of insects," like the *Ζεὺς ἀπομυῖος, μυίαγρος* of Elis (Ges., Winer, Movers, *Phöniz.* i. p. 175), since "the Fly-God cannot have received his name as the enemy of flies, like *lucus a non lucendo*," but was *Μυῖα θεός* (LXX., Joseph.), *i.e.* God represented as a fly, as a fly-idol, to which the name *Myiodes*, gnat-like, in Plin. *h. n.* xxix. 6, clearly points, and as a god of the sun and of summer must have stood in a similar relation to the flies to that of the oracle-god Apollo, who both sent diseases and took them away (*vid.* J. G. Müller, Art. *Beelzebub* in Herzog's *Cycl.* i. p. 768, and Stark, *Gaza*, pp. 260, 261). The latter observes that "these (the flies), which are governed in their coming and going by all the conditions of the weather, are apparently endowed with prophetic power themselves." This explains the fact that a special power of prophecy was attributed to this god.[1] *Ekron*, now *Akir*, the most northerly of the five Philistian capitals (see at Josh. xiii. 3).—Vers. 3, 4. But the angel of the Lord, the mediator of the revelations made by the invisible God to the covenant nation (see *Comm. on the Pentateuch*, vol. i. pp. 185–191, transl.), had spoken to Elijah to go and meet the king's messengers, who were going to inquire of Baalzebub, and to ask them whether it was from the want of a God in Israel (מִבְּלִי אֵין as in Ex. xiv. 11; see Ewald, § 323, *a*) that they turned to Baalzebub, and to announce to them the word of Jehovah, that Ahaziah would not rise up from his bed again, but would die. "And Elijah went," *sc.* to carry out the divine commission.—Vers. 5–8. The messengers did not recognise Elijah, but yet they turned back and reported the occurrence to the king, who knew at once, from the description they gave of the

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[1] The later Jews altered the name *Beelzebub* into Βεελζεβούλ, *i.e.* probably lord of the (heavenly) dwelling, as a name given to the *ἄρχων τῶν δαιμονίων* (Matt. x. 25, etc.); and the later Rabbins finally, by changing בַּעַל זְבוּל into בַּעַל זֶבֶל, made a fly-god into a dung-god, to express in the most intense form their abomination of idolatry (see Lightfoot, *Horæ hebr. et talm. in Matt.* xii. 24, and my *bibl. Archäol.* i. pp. 440, 441).

habitus of the man in reply to his question, that it was Elijah the *Tishbite*. מַה מִשְׁפַּט הָאִישׁ: "what was the manner of the man?" מִשְׁפָּט is used here to denote the peculiarity of a person, that which in a certain sense constitutes the vital law and right of the individual personality; *figura et habitus* (Vulg.). The servants described the prophet according to his outward appearance, which in a man of character is a reflection of his inner man, as אִישׁ בַּעַל שֵׂעָר, *vir pilosus, hirsutus*. This does not mean a man with a luxuriant growth of hair, but refers to the hairy dress, *i.e.* the garment made of sheep-skin or goat-skin or coarse camel-hair, which was wrapped round his body; the אַדֶּרֶת (ch. ii. 8; 1 Kings xix. 13), or אַדֶּרֶת שֵׂעָר (Zech. xiii. 4, cf. Matt. iii. 4, Heb. xi. 37), which was worn by the prophets, not as mere ascetics, but as preachers of repentance, the rough garment denoting the severity of the divine judgments upon the effeminate nation, which revelled in luxuriance and worldly lust. And this was also in keeping with "the leather girdle," אֵזוֹר עוֹר, ζώνη δερματίνη (Matt. iii. 4), whereas the ordinary girdle was of cotton or linen, and often very costly.

Vers. 9–16. After having executed the divine command, Elijah returned to the summit of the mountain, on which he dwelt. Most of the commentators suppose it to have been one of the peaks of Carmel, from ch. ii. 25 and 1 Kings xviii. 42, which is no doubt very probable, though it cannot be raised into certainty. Elijah's place of abode was known to the king; he therefore sent a captain with fifty men to fetch the prophet. To the demand of the captain, "Man of God, the king has said, Come down," Elijah replied, "And if I am a man of God, let fire fall from heaven and consume thee and thy fifty." (The expression וְאִם, *and* if, shows that Elijah's words followed immediately upon those of the captain.) This judicial miracle was immediately fulfilled.—Vers. 11, 12. The same fate befell a second captain, whom the king sent after the death of the first. He was more insolent than the first, "both because he was not brought to his senses by hearing of his punishment, and because he increased his impudence by adding *make haste* (מְהֵרָה)."—C. a Lap. For וַיַּעַן וַיְדַבֵּר the LXX. (*Cod. Alex.*) have καὶ ἀνέβη καὶ ἐλάλησε, so that they read וַיַּעַל. The correctness of this reading, according to which וַיַּעַן would be an error of the pen, is favoured not only by וַיַּעַל in vers. 9 and 13, but also by וַיְדַבֵּר which follows; for, as a general rule, וַיַּעַן would be followed by

וַיֹּאמֶר. The repetition of this judicial miracle was meant to show in the most striking manner not only the authority which rightfully belonged to the prophet, but also the help and protection which the Lord gave to His servants. At the same time, the question as to the "morality of the miracle," about which some have had grave doubts, is not set at rest by the remark of Thenius, that "the soldiers who were sent come into consideration here purely as instruments of a will acting in opposition to Jehovah." The third captain also carried out the ungodly command of the king, and he was not slain (vers. 13 sqq.). The first two must therefore have been guilty of some crime, which they and their people had to expiate with their death. This crime did not consist merely in their addressing him as "man of God," for the third addressed Elijah in the same way (ver. 13), but in their saying "Man of God, come down." This summons to the prophet, to allow himself to be led as a prisoner before the king, involved a contempt not only of the prophetic office in the person of Elijah, but also of the Lord, who had accredited him by miracles as His servant. The two captains who were first sent not only did what they were bound to do as servants of the king, but participated in the ungodly disposition of their lord (*συμβαίνοντες τῷ σκοπῷ τοῦ πεπομφότος* —Theodoret); they attacked the Lord with reckless daring in the person of the prophet, and the second captain, with his "Come down quickly," did it even more strongly than the first. This sin was punished, and that not by the prophet, but by the Lord Himself, who fulfilled the word of His servant.[1] What Elijah here did was an act of holy zeal for the honour of the Lord, in the spirit of the old covenant, under which God destroyed the insolent despisers of His name with fire and sword, to manifest the energy of His holy majesty by the side of the dead idols of the heathen. But this act cannot be transferred to the times of the new covenant, as is clearly shown in Luke ix. 54, 55, where Christ does not blame Elijah for what he did, but admonishes His disciples, who overlooked the difference between the economy of the law and that of the gospel, and in their carnal zeal wanted to imitate what Elijah had done in divine zeal for the honour of the Lord, which had been injured in his own person.—Vers. 13, 14. The king, disregarding the punishing hand of the Lord, which, even if it might possibly have been overlooked in the calamity that befell the captain who was first sent and his company, could not be misunderstood when a similar fate befell the second captain with his fifty men, sent a third company, in his defiant obduracy, to fetch the prophet. (שְׁלִשִׁים after חֲמִשִּׁים is apparently an error of the pen for שְׁלִשִׁי, as the following word הַשְּׁלִישִׁי shows.) But the third captain was better than his king, and wiser than his two predecessors. He obeyed the command of the king so far as to go to the prophet; but instead of haughtily summoning him to follow him, he bent his knee before the man of God, and prayed that his own life and the lives of his soldiers might be spared.—Vers. 15, 16. Then Elijah followed him to the king (מִפָּנָיו, before him, *i.e.* before the king, not before the captain; and אוֹתוֹ for אִתּוֹ, see Ewald, § 264, *b*), having been directed to do so by the angel of the Lord, and repeated to him the word of the Lord, which he had also conveyed to him through his messengers (see vers. 4 and 6).

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[1] *Οἱ τοῦ προφήτου κατηγοροῦντες κατὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ προφήτου κινοῦσι τὰς γλώττας*, as Theodoret very aptly observes.

Vers. 17 and 18. When Ahaziah died, according to the word of the Lord through Elijah, as he had no son, he was followed upon the throne by his brother Joram, "in the second year of Joram the son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah." This statement is at variance both with that in ch. iii. 1, to the effect that Joram began to reign in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat, and with that in 1 Kings xxii. 52, viz. that Ahaziah ascended the throne in the seventeenth year of the reign of Jehoshaphat, which lasted twenty-five years, and also with the statement in ch. viii. 16, that Joram of Judah became king over Judah in the fifth year of Joram of Israel. If, for example, Ahaziah of Israel died after a reign of not quite two years, at the most a year and a half, in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat; as Jehoshaphat himself reigned twenty-five years, he cannot have died till the seventh year of Joram of Israel, and his son Joram followed him upon the throne. The last of these discrepancies may be solved very simply, from the fact that, according to ch. viii. 16, Jehoshaphat was still king when his son Joram began to reign, so that Jehoshaphat abdicated in favour of his son about two years before his death. And the first discrepancy (that between ch. i. 17 and ch. iii. 1) is removed by Usher (*Annales M. ad a.m.* 3106 and 3112), Lightfoot, and others, after the example of the *Seder Olam*, by the assumption of a co-regency. According to this, when Jehoshaphat went with Ahab to Ramoth in Gilead to war against the Syrians, in the eighteenth year of his reign, which runs parallel to the twenty-second year of the reign of Ahab, he appointed his son Joram to the co-regency, and transferred to him the administration of the kingdom. It is from this co-regency that the statement in ch. i. 17 is dated, to the effect that Joram of Israel became king in the second year of Joram of Judah. This second year of the co-regency of Joram corresponds to the eighteenth year of the reign of Jehoshaphat (ch. iii. 1). And in the fifth year of his co-regency Jehoshaphat gave up the reins of government entirely to him. It is from this point of time, *i.e.* from the twenty-third year of Jehoshaphat, that we are to reckon the eight years of the reign of Joram (of Judah), so that he only reigned six years more after his father's death.[1] We have no information as to the reason which induced Jehoshaphat to abdicate in favour of his son two years before his death; for there is very little probability in the conjecture of Lightfoot (*Opp.* i. p. 85), that Jehoshaphat did this when he commenced the war with the Moabites in alliance with Joram of Israel, for the simple reason that the Moabites revolted after the death of Ahab, and Joram made preparations for attacking them immediately after their rebellion (ch. iii. 5-7), so that he must have commenced this expedition before the fifth year of his reign.

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[1] Wolff indeed boldly declares that "the co-regency of Joram is a pure fiction, and the biblical historians do not furnish the slightest warrant for any such supposition" (see p. 628 of the treatise mentioned at p. 187); but he cannot think of any other way of reconciling the differences than by making several alterations in the text, and inventing a co-regency in the case of the Israelitish king Ahaziah. The synchronism of the reigns of the Israelitish kings necessarily requires the solution adopted in the text. For if Joram of Israel, who began to reign in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat and reigned twelve years (ch. iii. 1), was slain at the same time as Ahaziah of Judah (ch. ix. 24-27), and Ahaziah of Judah reigned about one year and his predecessor Joram about eight years, so that the two together certainly reigned fully eight years; Joram of Judah must have ascended the throne four years after Joram of Israel, *i.e.* in the twenty-third year of Jehoshaphat, which runs parallel to the fifth year of Joram of Israel. Consequently the twenty-five years of Jehoshaphat are to be reduced to twenty-three in reckoning the sum-total of the years embraced by the period of the kings. It is true that there is no analogy for this combination of the years of the reigns of two kings, since the other reductions of which different chronologists are fond are perfectly arbitrary, and the case before us stands quite alone; but this exception to the rule is indicated clearly enough in the statement in ch. viii. 16, that Joram began to reign while Jehoshaphat was (still) king. When, however, Thenius objects to this mode of reconciling the differences, which even Winer adopts

CHAP. II. ELIJAH'S ASCENSION TO HEAVEN. ELISHA'S FIRST MIRACLES.

Vers. 1–13. Elijah's Ascension to Heaven.—Vers. 1–10. *Journey from Gilgal to the other side of the Jordan.*—Vers. 1, 2. When the time arrived that Jehovah was about to take up His servant Elijah in a tempest to heaven, Elijah went with his attendant Elisha from Gilgal down to Bethel. בַּסְּעָרָה, in the tempest or storm, *i.e.* in a tempestuous storm, which was frequently the herald of the divine self-revelations in the terrestrial world (*vid.* Job xxxviii. 1, xl. 6; Ezek. i. 4; Zech. ix. 14). הַשָּׁמַיִם is the accusative of direction. *Gilgal* and *Bethel* (*Beitin,* see at 1 Kings xii. 29) were seats of schools of the prophets, which Elijah had founded in the kingdom of the ten tribes. It is now generally admitted that *Gilgal,* from which they went *down* to Bethel, cannot be the place of that name which was situated in the Jordan valley to the east of Jericho, but must be the Gilgal upon the mountains, the elevated *Jiljilia* to the south-west of Silo (Seilun, see at Josh. viii. 35). On the way Elijah said to Elisha, " Stay here, I pray, for the Lord has sent me to Bethel;" but Elisha declared with a solemn oath that he would not leave him. The Lord had revealed to both that the seal of divine attestation was to be impressed upon the work of Elijah by his being miraculously taken up into heaven, to

in the third edition of his *bibl. Real-Wörterbuch,* i. p. 539, on the ground that the reign of Joram is dated most precisely in 1 Kings xxii. 51 and 2 Chron. xxi. 1, 5, 20, from the death of Jehoshaphat, and that an actual co-regency, viz. that of Jotham, is expressly mentioned in ch. xv. 5, which does not render it at all necessary to carry the years of his reign into those of his father's, this appeal to the case of Jotham cannot prove anything, for the simple reason that the biblical text knows nothing of any co-regency of Jotham and Uzziah, but simply states that when Uzziah was smitten with leprosy, his son Jotham *judged* the people of the land, but that he did not become king till after his father's death (ch. xv. 5, 7; 2 Chron. xxvi. 21, 23). It is indeed stated in 1 Kings xxii. 51 and 2 Chron. xxvi. 1, 5, 20, that Jehoshaphat died and his son Joram became king, which may be understood as meaning that he did not become king till after the death of Jehoshaphat; but there is no necessity to understand it so, and therefore it can be very easily reconciled with the more precise statement in ch. viii. 16, that Joram ascended the throne during the reign of Jehoshaphat, whereas the assertion of Thenius, that the circumstantial clause וִיהוֹשָׁפָט מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה in ch. viii. 16 is a gloss, is not critically established by the absence of these words from the LXX., Syr., and Arabic, and to expunge them from the text is nothing but an act of critical violence.

strengthen the faith not of Elisha only, but also of the disciples of the prophets and of all the godly in Israel; but the revelation had been made to them separately, so that Elijah had no suspicion that Elisha had also been informed as to his being taken away. He wanted, therefore, to get rid of his servant, not "to test his love and attachment" (Vatabl.), but from humility (C. a Lap. and others), because he did not wish to have any one present to witness his glorification without being well assured that it was in accordance with the will of God.—Ver. 3. In Bethel the disciples of the prophets came to meet Elisha, and said to him, "Knowest thou that Jehovah will take thy master from over thy head to-day?" לָקַח מֵעַל רֹאשׁ expresses in a pictorial manner the taking away of Elijah from his side by raising him to heaven, like *ἐπαίρειν* and *ὑπολαμβάνειν* in Acts i. 9, 10. Elisha replied, "I know it, be silent," because he knew Elijah's feeling. The Lord had therefore revealed to the disciples of the prophets the taking away of Elijah, to strengthen their faith.—Vers. 4–7. In Bethel, and again in Jericho, to which they both proceeded from Bethel, Elijah repeated the appeal to Elisha to stay there, but always in vain. The taking away of Elijah had also been revealed to the disciples of the prophets at Jericho. Thus they both came to the Jordan, whilst fifty disciples of the prophets from Jericho followed them at a distance, to be eye-witnesses of the miraculous translation of their master. The course which Elijah took before his departure from this earth, viz. from Gilgal past Bethel and Jericho, was not merely occasioned by the fact that he was obliged to touch at these places on the way to the Jordan, but had evidently also the same higher purpose, for which his ascension to heaven had been revealed both to Elisha and to the disciples of the prophets at Bethel and Jericho. Elijah himself said that the Lord had sent him to Bethel, to Jericho, to the Jordan (vers. 2, 4, 6). He therefore took this way from an impulse received from the Spirit of God, that he might visit the schools of the prophets, which he had founded, once more before his departure, and strengthen and fortify the disciples of the prophets in the consecration of their lives to the service of the Lord, though without in the least surmising that they had been informed by the Spirit of the Lord of his approaching departure from this life. But as his ascension to heaven took place not so much for his own sake, as because of those associates in his office who were left behind, God had revealed it to so many, that they might be even more firmly established in their calling by the miraculous glorification of their master than by his words, his teaching, and his admonitions, so that they might carry it on without fear or trembling, even if their great master should no longer stand by their side with the might of his spiritual power to instruct, advise, or defend. But above all, Elisha, whom the Lord had appointed as his successor (1 Kings xix. 16), was to be prepared for carrying on his work by the last journey of his master. He did not leave his side therefore, and resolved, certainly also from an inward impulse of the Spirit of God, to be an eye-witness of his glorification, that he might receive the spiritual inheritance of the first-born from his departing spiritual father.—Ver. 8. When they reached the Jordan, Elijah took his prophet's cloak, rolled it up (גָּלַם, ἅπ. λεγ. *convolvit*), and smote the water with it; whereupon the water divided hither and thither, so that they both passed through on dry ground. The cloak, that outward sign of the prophet's office, became the vehicle of the Spirit's power which works unseen, and with which the prophet was inspired. The miracle itself is analogous to the miraculous dividing of the Red Sea by the stretching out of Moses' rod (Ex. xiv. 16, 21); but at the same time it is very peculiar, and quite in accordance with the prophetic character of Elijah. Moses, the leader of the people, performed his miracles with his shepherd's *crook*, Elijah the prophet divided the river with his prophet's mantle.—Vers. 9, 10. After crossing the Jordan, Elijah allowed his servant and companion to make one more request before he was taken away, in the full confidence that the Lord would fulfil it in answer to his prayer; and Elisha asked, "Let פִּי־שְׁנַיִם בְּרוּחֲךָ, *διπλᾶ ἐν πνεύματί σου, i.e.* a double portion in (of) thy spirit be granted to me." This request has been misunderstood by many translators, from Ephraem Syrus down to Köster and F. W. Krummacher, who have supposed that Elisha wished to have a double measure of Elijah's spirit ("that thy spirit may be twofold in me:" Luther after the Vulgate, "*ut fiat in me duplex spiritus tuus*"); and some have taken it as referring to the fact that Elisha performed many more miracles and much greater ones than Elijah (Cler., Pfeiffer, *dub. vex.* p. 442), others to the gift of prophecy *and* miracles (Köster, *die Proph.* p. 82), whilst others, like Krummacher, have understood by it that the spirit of Elisha, as an evangelical spirit, was twice as great as the legal spirit of Elijah. But there is no such meaning implied in the words, nor can it be inferred from the answer of Elijah; whilst it is impossible to show that there was any such measure of the Spirit in the life and works of Elisha in comparison with the spirit of Elisha, although his request was fulfilled. The request of Elisha is evidently based upon Deut. xxi. 17, where פִּי־שְׁנַיִם בְּ denotes the double portion which the first-born received in (of) the father's inheritance, as R. Levi b. Gers., Seb. Münst., Vatabl., Grot., and others have perceived, and as Hengstenberg (*Beitrr.* ii. p. 133 f.) in our days has once more proved. Elisha, resting his foot upon this law, requested of Elijah as a first-born son the double portion of his spirit for his inheritance. Elisha looked upon himself as the first-born son of Elijah in relation to the other "sons of the prophets," inasmuch as Elijah by the command of God had called him to be his successor and to carry on his work. The answer of Elijah agrees with this: "Thou hast asked a hard thing," he said, because the granting of this request was not in *his* power, but in the power of God. He therefore made its fulfilment dependent upon a condition, which did not rest with himself, but was under the control of God: "if thou shalt see me taken from thee (לֻקָּח, *partic. Pual* with the מ dropped, see Ges. § 52, Anm. *b*; Ewald, § 169, *d*), let it be so to thee; but if not, it will not be so." From his own personal inclination Elijah did not wish to have Elisha, who was so closely related to him, as an eye-witness of his translation from the earth; but from his persistent refusal to leave him he could already see that he would not be able to send him away. He therefore left the matter to the Lord, and made the guidance of God the sign for Elisha whether the Lord would fulfil his request or not. Moreover, the request itself even on the part of the petitioner presupposes a certain dependence, and for this reason Elisha could not possibly desire that the double measure of Elijah's spirit should be bestowed upon him. A dying man cannot leave to his heir more than he has himself. And, lastly, even the ministry of Elisha, when compared with that of Elijah, has all the appearance of being subordinate to it. He lives and labours merely as the continuer of the work already begun by Elijah, both outwardly in relation to the worshippers of idols, and inwardly in relation to the disciples of the prophets. Elisha performs the anointing of Jehu and Hazael, with which Elijah was charged, and thereby prepares the way for the realization of that destruction of Ahab's house which Elijah predicted to the king; and he merely receives and fosters those schools of the prophets which Elijah had already founded. And again, it is not Elisha but Elijah who appears as the Coryphæus of prophecy along with Moses, the representative of the law, upon the mount of transfiguration (Matt. xvii. 3).—It is only a thoroughly external mode of observation that can discover in the fact that Elisha performed a greater number of miracles than Elijah, a proof that the spirit of Elijah rested doubly upon him.

Vers. 11-13. *Elijah's ascension.*—Ver. 11. While they were walking on and talking to each other, " behold (there suddenly appeared) a fiery chariot and fiery horses, and separated the two (by driving between them), and Elijah went up in the tempest to heaven." As God had formerly taken Enoch away, so that he did not taste of death (see at Gen. v. 24), so did He also suddenly take Elijah away from Elisha, and carry him to heaven without dying. It was בַּסְּעָרָה, " in the tempest," that he was taken away. The storm was accompanied by a fiery phenomenon, which appeared to the eyes of Elisha as a chariot of fire with horses of fire, in which Elijah rode to heaven. The tempest was an earthly substratum for the theophany, the fiery chariots and fiery horses the symbolical form in which the translation of his master to heaven presented itself to the eye of Elisha, who was left behind.[1] —The ascension of Elijah has been compared to the death of Moses. " As God Himself buried Moses, and his grave has not been found to this day, so did He fetch Elias to heaven in a still more glorious manner in a fiery chariot with fiery horses, so that fifty men, who searched for him, did not find him on the earth " (Ziegler). This parallel has a real foundation in the appearance of Moses and Elijah with Christ on the mountain of transfiguration, only we must not overlook the difference in the departure from this life of these two witnesses of God. For Moses died and was to die in the wilderness because of his sin (Deut. xxxii.

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[1] All further questions, *e.g.* concerning the nature of the fiery chariot, the place to which Elijah was carried, the day of his ascension, which C. a Lap., according to the Romish martyrology, assigns to the 20th of July in the 19th year of Jehoshaphat, and others of the same kind, which have been discussed by the earlier commentators, are to be set down as useless trifles, which go beyond the bounds of our thought and comprehension.

49 sqq.), and was only buried by the hand of the Lord, so that no one has seen his grave, not so much for the purpose of concealing it from men as to withdraw his body from corruption, and preserve and glorify it for the eternal life (see the Comm. on Deut. xxxiv. 5, 6). Elijah did not die, but was received into heaven by being "changed" (1 Cor. xv. 51, 52; 1 Thess. iv. 15 sqq.). This difference is in perfect harmony with the character and position of these two men in the earthly kingdom of God. Moses the lawgiver departed from the earthly life by the way of the law, which worketh death as the wages of sin (Rom. vi. 23, vii. 13); Elijah the prophet, who was appointed to admonish for future times (*ὁ καταγραφεὶς ἐν ἐλεγμοῖς εἰς καιρούς*), to pacify the wrath before the judgment, to turn the heart of the father to the son, and to restore the tribes of Jacob (Ecclus. xlviii. 10), was taken to heaven as the forerunner of Christ (Mal. iii. 23, 24; Matt. xi. 10, 11) without tasting of death, to predict the ascension of our Lord, and to set it forth in Old Testament mode; for as a servant, as the servant of the law, who with his fiery zeal preached both by word and deed the fire of the wrath of divine justice to the rebellious generation of his own time, Elijah was carried by the Lord to heaven in a fiery storm, the symbol of the judicial righteousness of God. "As he was an unparalleled champion for the honour of the Lord, a fiery war-chariot was the symbol of his triumphal procession into heaven" (O. v. Gerlach). But Christ, as the Son, to whom all power is given in heaven and on earth, after having taken away from death its sting and from hell its victory, by His resurrection from the grave (1 Cor. xv. 55), returned to the Father in the power of His eternal deity, and ascended to heaven in His glorified body before the eyes of His disciples as the victor over death and hell, until a cloud received Him and concealed His figure from their sight (Luke xxiv. 51; Acts i. 9).[1]—Ver. 12. When Elisha saw his

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[1] The actual truth of this miraculous departure of the prophet is strongly confirmed by the appearance of Elijah, as recorded in Matt. xvii. 3, 4 and Luke ix. 30, upon which the seal of attestation is impressed by the ascension of our Lord. His ascension was in harmony with the great mission with which he, the mightiest of all the prophets, was entrusted in that development of the divine plan of salvation which continued through the centuries in the interval between Moses and Christ.—Whoever is unable to do justice to the spirit and nature of the divine revelation of mercy, will be unable to comprehend this miracle also. This was the case with Josephus, and even with Ephraem the Syrian father. Josephus, for example (*Ant.* ix. 2, 2), says nothing about the

master carried thus miraculously away, he exclaimed, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and horsemen thereof!" and as he saw him no more, he took hold of his clothes and rent them in two pieces, *i.e.* from the top to the bottom, as a proof of the greatness of his sorrow at his being taken away. He called Elijah אָבִי, "my father," as his spiritual father, who had begotten him as his son through the word of God. "Chariot (war-chariot) and horsemen of Israel," on which the Israelitish kings based the might and security of their kingdom, are a symbolical representa-

miracle, and simply states that Ἠλίας ἐξ ἀνθρώπων ἠφανίσθη· καὶ οὐδεὶς ἔγνω μέχρις τῆς σήμερον αὐτοῦ τὴν τελευτήν, and adds that it is written of Elijah and Enoch in the sacred books, ὅτι γεγόνασιν ἀφανεῖς. θάνατον δὲ αὐτῶν οὐδεὶς οἶδεν. Ephraem, the Christian father, passes over the last clause of ver. 11, "so Elijah went up in the whirlwind to heaven," in his exposition of our chapter, and paraphrases the rest of the words thus: "There came suddenly from on high a fire-storm, and in the midst of the flame the form of a chariot and of horses, and separated them from one another; one of the two it left on the earth, the other, namely Elijah, it carried up on high (ܕܒܪ ܠܡܪܘܡܐ); but whither the wind (or Spirit? ܪܘܚܐ) took him, or in what place it left him, the Scriptures have *not* told us. They say, however, that some years afterwards an alarming letter from him, full of threats, was delivered to king Joram of Judah." Following the lead of such predecessors as these, J. D. Michaelis, who boasts so much of his orthodoxy, informed the "unlearned" (in the *Anmerkungen* to his *Bibel-übersetzung*) that Elijah did not go to heaven, but was simply carried away from Palestine, and lived at least twelve years more, that he might be able to write a letter to king Joram (2 Chron. xxi. 12), for "men do not receive letters from people in heaven." This incident has been frequently adduced since then as a disproof of the ascension of Elijah. But there is not a word in the Chronicles about any letter (ספר, ספרים, or אגרת, which would be the Hebrew for a letter); all that is said is that a *writing* (מכתב) from the prophet Elijah was brought to Joram, in which he was threatened with severe punishments on account of his apostasy. Now such a writing as this might very well have been written by Elijah before his ascension, and handed to Elisha to be sent by him to king Joram at the proper time. Even Bertheau admits that, according to the chronological data of the Old Testament, Elijah might have been still living in the reign of Joram of Judah; and it is *a priori* probable that he both spoke of Joram's sin and threatened him with punishment. It is impossible to fix the year of Elijah's ascension. Neither the fact that it is mentioned after the death of Ahaziah of Israel, which he himself had personally foretold to that ungodly king, nor the circumstance that in the war which Jehoshaphat and Joram of Israel waged with the Moabites the prophet Elisha was consulted (ch. iii.), warrants the conclusion that Elijah was taken from the earth in the interval between these two events. It is very obvious from ch. iii. 11, that the two kings applied to Elisha simply because he was in the neighbourhood, and not because Elijah was no longer alive.

tion of the strong defence which Elijah had been through his ministry to the kingdom of Israel (cf. ch. xiii. 14).—Ver. 13. He then took up Elijah's prophet's mantle, which had fallen from him when he was snatched away, and returned to the Jordan. The prophet's mantle of the master fell to Elisha the disciple, as a pledge to himself that his request was fulfilled, and as a visible sign to others that he was his divinely appointed successor, and that the spirit of Elijah rested upon him (ver. 15).

Vers. 14–25. Return of Elisha to Jericho and Bethel, and his First Miracles.—Vers. 14, 15. Having returned to the banks of the Jordan, Elisha smote the water with Elijah's mantle, saying, "Where is Jehovah the God of Elijah, yea He?" and the water divided hither and thither, so that he was able to go through. אַף־הוּא, which the LXX. did not understand, and have simply reproduced in Greek characters, ἀφφώ, is an emphatic apposition, "yea He," such as we find after suffixes, *e.g.* Prov. xxii. 19; and אַף is only a strengthened גַּם, which is more usual when emphatic prominence is given to the suffix (*vid.* Ges. § 121, 3). The Masoretic accentuation, which separates it from the preceding words, rests upon a false interpretation. There is no need either for the alteration proposed by Ewald, § 362, *a*, of אַף into אַךְ, "he had scarcely smitten the water," especially as not a single analogous example can be adduced of the use of אַךְ הוּא followed by a *Vav consec.*; or for the conjecture that the original reading in the text was אֵפוֹא (Houb., Böttch., Then.), "where is now the God of Elijah?" which derives no critical support from the ἀφφώ of the LXX., and is quite at variance with Hebrew usage, since אֵפוֹא generally stands immediately after אַיֵּה, when it serves to strengthen the interrogation (*vid.* Judg. ix. 38, Job xvii. 15, Isa. xix. 12, Hos. xiii. 10). This miracle was intended partly to confirm Elisha's conviction that his petition had been fulfilled, and partly to accredit him in the eyes of the disciples of the prophets and the people generally as the divinely appointed successor of Elijah. All the disciples of the prophets from Jericho saw also from this that the spirit of Elijah rested upon Elisha, and came to meet him to do homage to him as being now their spiritual father and lord.—Vers. 16–18. But the disciples of the prophets at Jericho were so unable to realize the fact of Elijah's translation, although it had been previously revealed to them, that they begged permission of Elisha to send out fifty brave men to seek for Elijah. פֶּן־נְשָׂאוֹ: whether the Spirit of the Lord has not taken him and cast him upon one of the mountains, or into one of the valleys. פֶּן with the perfect is used "where there is fear of a fact, which as is conjectured almost with certainty has already happened," like *μὴ* in the sense of "*whether not*" (*vid.* Ewald, § 337, *b*). רוּחַ יְהוָֹה is not a wind sent by Jehovah (Ges.), but the Spirit of Jehovah, as in 1 Kings xviii. 12. The *Chethîb* גֵּיאוֹת is the regular formation from גַּיְא or גֵּיא (Zech. xiv. 4); the *Keri* with the transposition of א and י, the later form: גֵּאָיוֹת, Ezek. vii. 16, xxxi. 12, etc. The belief expressed by the disciples of the prophets, that Elijah might have been miraculously carried away, was a popular belief, according to 1 Kings xviii. 12, which the disciples of the prophets were probably led to share, more especially in the present case, by the fact that they could not imagine a translation to heaven as a possible thing, and with the indefiniteness of the expression לָקַח מֵעַל רֹאשֶׁךָ could only understand the divine revelation which they had received as referring to removal by death. So that even if Elisha told them how miraculously Elijah had been taken from him, which he no doubt did, they might still believe that by the appearance in the storm the Lord had taken away His servant from this life, that is to say, had received his soul into heaven, and had left his earthly tabernacle somewhere on the earth, for which they would like to go in search, that they might pay the last honours to their departed master. Elisha yielded to their continued urgency and granted their request; whereupon fifty men sought for three days for Elijah's body, and after three days' vain search returned to Jericho. עַד־בֹּשׁ, to being ashamed, *i.e.* till he was ashamed to refuse their request any longer (see at Judg. iii. 25).

The two following miracles of Elisha (vers. 19–25) were also intended to accredit him in the eyes of the people as a man endowed with the Spirit and power of God, as Elijah had been. Vers. 19–22. *Elisha makes the water at Jericho wholesome.*—During his stay at Jericho (ver. 18) the people of the city complained, that whilst the situation of the place was good in other respects, the water was bad and the land produced miscarriages. הָאָרֶץ, the land, *i.e.* the soil, on account of the badness of the water; not "the inhabitants, both man and beast" (Thenius). Elisha then told them to bring a new dish with salt, and poured the salt into the spring with these words: "Thus saith the Lord, I have made this water sound; there will no more be death and miscarriage thence". (מִשָּׁם). מְשַׁכֶּלֶת is a substantive here (*vid.* Ewald, 160, *e*). מוֹצָא הַמַּיִם is no doubt the present spring *Ain es Sultân*, the only spring near to Jericho, the waters of which spread over the plain of Jericho, thirty-five minutes' distance from the present village and castle, taking its rise in a group of elevations not far from the foot of the mount *Quarantana* (Kuruntul); a large and beautiful spring, the water of which is neither cold nor warm, and has an agreeable and sweet (according to Steph. Schultz, "somewhat salt") taste. It was formerly enclosed by a kind of reservoir or semicircular wall of hewn stones, from which the water was conducted in different directions to the plain (*vid.* Rob. *Pal.* ii. p. 283 sqq.). With regard to the miracle, a spring which supplied the whole of the city and district with water could not be so greatly improved by pouring in a dish of salt, that the water lost its injurious qualities for ever, even if salt does possess the power of depriving bad water of its unpleasant taste and injurious effects. The use of these natural means does not remove the miracle. Salt, according to its power of preserving from corruption and decomposition, is a symbol of incorruptibility and of the power of life which destroys death (see Bähr, *Symbolik*, ii. pp. 325, 326). As such it formed the earthly substratum for the spiritual power of the divine word, through which the spring was made for ever sound. A new dish was taken for the purpose, not *ob munditiem* (Seb. Schm.), but as a symbol of the renewing power of the word of God.—But if this miracle was adapted to show to the people the beneficent character of the prophet's ministry, the following occurrence was intended to prove to the despisers of God that the Lord does not allow His servants to be ridiculed with impunity.—Vers. 23-25. *The judgment of God upon the loose fellows at Bethel.* Elisha proceeded from Jericho to Bethel, the chief seat of the idolatrous calf-worship, where there was also a school of the prophets (ver. 3). On the way thither there came small boys out of the city to meet him, who ridiculed him by calling out, "Come up, bald-head, come," etc. קֵרֵחַ, bald-head (with a bald place at the back of the head), was used as a term of scorn (cf. Isa. iii. 17, 24); but hardly from a suspicion of leprosy (Winer, Thenius). It was rather as a natural defect, for Elisha, who lived for fifty years after this (ch. xiii. 14), could not have been bald from age at that time.—Ver. 24. The prophet then turned round and cursed the scoffers in the name of the Lord, and there came two bears out of the wood, and tore forty-two boys of them in pieces. The supposed "immorality of cursing," which Thenius still adduces as a disproof of the historical truth of this miracle, even if it were established, would not affect Elisha only, but would fall back upon the Lord God, who executed the curse of His servant in such a manner upon these worthless boys. And there is no need, in order to justify the judicial miracle, to assume that there was a preconcerted plan which had been devised by the chief rulers of the city out of enmity to the prophet of the Lord, so that the children had merely been put forward (O. v. Gerlach). All that is necessary is to admit that the worthless spirit which prevailed in Bethel was openly manifested in the ridicule of the children, and that these boys knew Elisha, and in his person insulted the prophet of the Lord. If this was the case, then Elisha cursed the boys for the purpose of avenging the honour of the Lord, which had been injured in his person; and the Lord caused this curse to be fulfilled, to punish in the children the sins of the parents, and to inspire the whole city with a salutary dread of His holy majesty.[1]—Ver. 25. Elisha went from Bethel to Carmel (see at 1 Kings xviii. 19), probably to strengthen himself in solitude for the continuation of his master's work. He returned thence to Samaria, where, according to ch. vi. 32, he possessed a house.

CHAP. III. JORAM OF ISRAEL, AND THE EXPEDITION AGAINST MOAB WHICH HE UNDERTOOK IN COMPANY WITH JEHOSHAPHAT.

Vers. 1–3. REIGN OF JORAM OF ISRAEL.—For the chronological statement in ver. 1, see at ch. i. 17. *Joram* or *Jehoram* was not so ungodly as his father Ahab and his mother Jezebel. He had the statue or pillar of Baal, which his father had erected in Samaria, removed; and it was only to the sin of Jeroboam, *i.e.* the calf-worship, that he adhered. Joram therefore wished to abolish the worship of Baal and elevate the worship of Jehovah, under the image of the calf (ox), into the religion of his kingdom once more. For the singular suffix מִמֶּנָּה see Ewald, § 317, *a.* He did not succeed, however, in exterminating the worship of Baal. It not only continued in Samaria, but appears to have been carried on again in the most shameless manner (cf. ch. x. 18 sqq.); at which we cannot be surprised, since his mother Jezebel, that fanatical worshipper of Baal, was living throughout the whole of his reign (ch. ix. 30).

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[1] Augustine, or the author of the *Sermo* 204 *de Tempore* (or *Sermo* 41 *de Elisæo* in t. v. of the *Opp. August.*, ed. J. P. Migne, p. 1826), which is attributed to him, gives a similar explanation. "The insolent boys," he says, "are to be supposed to have done this at the instigation of their parents; for they would not have called out if it had displeased their parents." And with regard to the object of the judicial punishment, he says it was inflicted "that the elders might receive a lesson through the smiting of the little ones, and the death of the sons might be a lesson to the parents; and that they might learn to fear the prophet, whom they would not love, notwithstanding the wonders which he performed."

Vers. 4-27. WAR OF JORAM, IN ALLIANCE WITH JEHOSHAPHAT, AGAINST THE MOABITES.—Vers. 4, 5. The occasion of this war was the rebellion of the Moabites, *i.e.* the refusal to pay tribute to Israel since the death of Ahab. Mesha the (vassal-) king of Moab was a possessor of flocks, and paid to the king of Israel 100,000 lambs and 100,000 rams; not merely at the commencement of each new reign (Cler.), but as a yearly tribute (הֵשִׁיב, to bring again = to bring repeatedly, as in Num. xviii. 9, etc.). This yearly tribute could not be exorbitant for the land of the Moabites, which abounded in good pasture, and was specially adapted for the rearing of flocks. The payment of tribute in natural objects and in the produce of the land was very customary in ancient times, and is still usual among the tribes of Asia.[1] נוֹקֵד signifies both a shepherd (Amos i. 1) and also a possessor of flocks. In Arabic it is properly the possessor of a superior kind of sheep and goats (*vid.* Boch. *Hicroz.* i. p. 483 sq. ed. Ros.). צֶמֶר may either be taken as a second object to הֵשִׁיב, or be connected with אֵילִים as an accusative of looser government (Ewald, § 287, *h*). In the first case the tribute would consist of the wool (the fleeces) of 100,000 lambs and 100,000 rams; in the second, of 100,000 lambs and the wool of 100,000 rams. In support of the latter we may quote Isa. xvi. 1, where lambs are mentioned as tribute.—Vers. 5 sqq. The statement concerning the rebellion of the Moabites, which has already been mentioned in ch. i. 1, is repeated here, because it furnished the occasion for the expedition about to be described. Ahaziah had been unable to do anything during his short reign to renew the subjugation of Moab; Joram was therefore anxious to overtake what had been neglected immediately after his ascent of the throne. He went to Samaria בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא, at that time, namely, when he renewed his demand for the tribute and it was refused (Thenius), and mustered all Israel, *i.e.* raised an army out of the whole kingdom, and asked Jehoshaphat to join in the war, which he willingly promised to do (as in 1 Kings xxii. 4), notwithstanding the fact that he had been blamed by prophets for his alliance with Ahab and Ahaziah (2 Chron. xix. 2 and xx. 37). He probably wished to chastise the Moabites still further on this occasion for their invasion of Judah (2 Chron. xx.), and to do his part by bringing them once more under the yoke of Israel, to put it out of their power to make fresh incursions into Judah.—Ver. 8. In reply to Joram's question, "By which way shall we advance (against Moab)?" Jehoshaphat decided in favour of "the way through the desert of Edom." There were two ways by which it was possible to enter the land of the Moabites; namely, either by going above the Dead Sea, and crossing the Jordan and the boundary river Arnon, and so entering it from the north, or by going round the southern point of the Dead Sea, and advancing through the northern portion of the mountains of Edom, and thus entering it from the south. The latter way was the longer of the two, and the one attended with the greatest difficulties and dangers, because the army would have to cross mountains which were very difficult to ascend. Nevertheless Jehoshaphat decided in its favour, partly because, if they took the northern route, they would have the Syrians at Ramoth in Gilead to fear, partly also because the Moabites, from their very confidence in the inaccessibility of their southern boundary, would hardly expect any attack from that side, and might therefore, if assailed at that point, be taken off their guard and easily defeated, and probably also from a regard to the king of Edom, whom they could induce to join them with his troops if they took that route, not so much perhaps for the purpose of strengthening their own army as to make sure of his forces, namely, that he would not make a fresh attempt at rebellion by a second invasion of the kingdom of Judah while

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[1] *Pecunia ipsa a pecore appellabatur. Etiam nunc in tabulis Censoriis pascua dicuntur omnia, ex quibus populus reditus habet, quia diu hoc solum vectigal fuit. Mulctatio quoque nonnisi ovium boumque impendio dicebatur.*—PLINII *h. nat.* xviii. 3.

Jehoshaphat was taking the field against the Moabites.—Ver. 9. But however cleverly this plan may have been contrived, when the united army had been marching round for seven days and was passing through the deep rocky valley of the *Ahsy*,[1] which divided the territories of Edom and Moab, it was in the greatest danger of perishing from want of water for men and cattle, as the river which flows through this valley, and in which they probably hoped to find a sufficient supply of water, since according to Robinson (*Pal.* ii. pp. 476 and 488) it is a stream which never fails, was at that time perfectly dry.

In this distress the hearts of the two kings were manifested.—Vers. 10–12. Joram cried out in his despair: "Woe, that Jehovah has called these three kings, to give them into the hand of Moab!" (כִּי, *that*, serves to give emphasis to the assurance; see Ewald, § 330, *b.*) Jehoshaphat, on the other hand, had confidence in the Lord, and inquired whether there was no prophet there, through whom they could seek counsel of the Lord (as in 1 Kings xxii. 7); whereupon one of the servants of the Israelitish king answered that Elisha was there, who had poured water upon the hands of Elijah, *i.e.* had been with him daily as his servant, and therefore could probably obtain and give a revelation from God. Elisha may perhaps have come to the neighbourhood of the army at the instigation of the Spirit of God, because the distress of the kings was to be one means in the hand of the Lord, not only of distinguishing the prophet in the eyes of Joram, but also of pointing Joram to the Lord as the only true God. The three kings, humbled by the calamity, went in person to Elisha, instead of sending for him.—Vers. 13, 14. In order still further to humble the king of Israel, who was already bowed down by the trouble, and to produce some salutary fruit of repentance in his heart, Elisha addressed him in these words: "What have I to do with thee? Go to the (Baal-) prophets of thy father and thy mother! Let them help thee." When Joram replied to this in a supplicatory tone: אַל, no, pray (as in Ruth i. 13), *i.e.* speak not in this refusing way, for the Lord has brought these three kings—not me alone, but Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom also—into this trouble; Elisha said to him with a solemn oath (cf. 1 Kings xvii. 1): "If I did not regard Jehoshaphat, I should not look at thee and have respect to thee," *i.e.* I should not deign to look at thee, much less to help thee.—Vers. 15–17. He then sent for a minstrel, to collect his mind from the impressions of the outer world by the soft tones of the instrument, and by subduing the self-life and life in the external world to become absorbed in the intuition of divine things. On this influence of music upon the state of the mind, see the remark on 1 Sam. xvi. 16, and Passavant's *Untersuchungen über den Lebens-magnetismus*, p. 207 (ed. 2).—As the minstrel was playing, the hand of the Lord came upon him (וְהָיָה according to the later usage for וַיְהִי, as in 1 Sam. xvii. 48, etc.; compare Ewald, § 345, *b*, and יַד יְהוָה as in 1 Kings xviii. 46), so that he said in the name of the Lord: "Make this valley full of trenches (עָשֹׂה, *inf. abs.* for the imperative; for גֵּבִים גֵּבִים see Ges. § 108, 4); for thus saith the Lord, ye will see neither wind nor rain, and this valley will be filled with water, that ye may be able to drink, and your flocks and your cattle." גֵּבִים are trenches for collecting water (*vid.* Jer. xiv. 3), which would suddenly flow down through the brook-valley. This large quantity of water came on the (following) morning "by the way of Edom" (ver. 20), a heavy fall of rain or violent storm having taken place, as is evident from the context, in the eastern mountains of Edom, at a great distance from the Israelitish camp, the water of which filled the brook-valley, *i.e.* the Wady *el Kurahy* and *el Ahsy* (see at ver. 9) at once, without the Israelites observing anything either of the wind, which always precedes rain in the East (Harmar, *Beobb.* i. pp. 51, 52), or of the rain itself. מִקְנֵיכֶם

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[1] The usual route from southern Judæa to the land of the Moabites, which even the Crusaders and more recent travellers took, runs round the Dead Sea up to the mouth of the Wady *ed Deraah* or *Kerak*, and then up this wady to Kerak (*vid.* Rob. ii. p. 231). The allied kings did not take this route however, but went through the Wady *el Kurahy* or *es-Safieh*, which opens into the southern end of the Dead Dea, and which is called the Wady *el Ahsy* farther up in the mountains, by Seetzen (*R.* ii. pp. 355, 356) erroneously the Wady *el Hössa* (Rob. ii. p. 488), a ravine through which Burckhardt passed with the greatest difficulty (*Syrien*, ii. p. 673). That they advanced by this route is a necessary inference from the fact, that when they first suffered from want of water they were on the border of the Moabitish territory, of which this very wady forms the boundary (ver. 21; see Burckh. p. 674, and Rob. *Pal.* ii. p. 555), and the water came flowing from Edom (ver. 20). Neither of these circumstances is applicable to the Wady *el Kerak*.—Still less can we assume, with O. v. Gerlach, that they chose the route through the Arabah that they might approach Moab from the south, as the Israelites under Moses had done. For it would have been impossible for them to reach the border of Moab by this circuitous route. And why should they go so far round, with the way through Edom open to them?

are the flocks intended for slaughtering, בְּהֶמְתְּכֶם the beasts of burden.—Vers. 18, 19. Elisha continued: "and this is too little for Jehovah (the comparative force of נָקַל is implied in the context, especially in the alternating combination of the two clauses, which is indicated by וְ . . . וְ, see Ewald, § 360, *c*): He will also give Moab into your hand, and ye will smite all the fortified and choice cities, fell all the good trees (fruit-trees), stop up all the springs of water, and spoil all the good fields with stones." מִבְצָר and מִבְחוֹר are intended to produce a play upon words, through the resemblance in their sound and meaning (Ewald, § 160, *c*). In the announcement of the devastation of the land there is an allusion to Deut. xx. 19, 20, according to which the Israelites were ordered to spare the fruit-trees when Canaan was taken. These instructions were not to apply to Moab, because the Moabites themselves as the arch-foes of Israel would not act in any other way with the land of Israel if they should gain the victory. הַכְאִב, to add pain, is a poetical expression for spoiling a field or rendering it infertile through the heaping up of stones.—Ver. 20. The water came in the morning at the time of the morning sacrifice (see 1 Kings xviii. 36), to indicate that the Lord was once more restoring His favour to the people on account of the sacrifice presented to Him in His temple.

The help of God, which preserved the Israelitish army from destruction, also prepared destruction for the Moabites. Vers. 21–23. On hearing the report of the march of the allied kings, Moab had raised all the men that were capable of bearing arms, and stationed them on the frontier. In the morning, when the sun had risen above the water, the Moabites saw the water opposite to them like blood, and said: "That is blood: the (allied) kings have destroyed themselves and smitten one another; and now to the spoil, Moab!" Coming with this expectation to the Israelitish camp, they were received by the allies, who were ready for battle, and put to flight. The divine help consisted, therefore, not in a miracle which surpassed the laws of nature, but simply in the fact that the Lord God, as He had predicted through His prophet, caused the forces of nature ordained by Him to work in the predetermined manner. As the sudden supply of an abundance of water was caused in a natural way by a heavy fall of rain, so the illusion, which was so fatal to the Moabites, is also to be explained in the natural manner indicated in the text. From the reddish earth of the freshly dug trenches the water collected in them had acquired a reddish colour, which was considerably intensified by the rays of the rising sun, so that when seen from a distance it resembled blood. The Moabites, however, were the less likely to entertain the thought of an optical delusion, from the fact that with their accurate acquaintance with the country they knew very well that there was no water in the wady at that time, and they had neither seen nor heard anything of the rain which had fallen at a great distance off in the Edomitish mountains. The thought was therefore a natural one, that the water was blood, and that the cause of the blood could only have been that their enemies had massacred one another, more especially as the jealousy between Israel and Judah was not unknown to them, and they could have no doubt that Edom had only come with them as a forced ally after the unsuccessful attempt at rebellion which it had made a short time before; and, lastly, they cannot quite have forgotten their own last expedition against Judah in alliance with the Edomites and Ammonites, which had completely failed, because the men composing their own army had destroyed one another. But if they came into collision with the allied army of the Israelites under such a delusion as this, the battle could only end in defeat and in a general flight so far as they were concerned.—Vers. 24, 25. The Israelites followed the fugitives into their own land and laid it waste, as Elisha had prophesied (ver. 25 compared with ver. 19). The *Chethîb* ויבו־בָהּ is to be read וַיָּבוֹ בָהּ (for וַיָּבוֹא, as in 1 Kings xii. 12): and (Israel) came into the land and smote Moab. The *Keri* וַיַּכּוּ is a bad emendation. הַכּוֹת is either the infinitive construct used instead of the infin. absolute (Ewald, § 351, *c*), or an unusual form of the inf. absol. (Ewald, § 240, *b*). עַד־הִשְׁאִיר, till one (= so that one only) left its stones in *Kir-chareseth*. On the infinitive form הִשְׁאִיר see at Josh. viii. 22. The suffix in אֲבָנֶיהָ probably points forward to the following noun (Ewald, § 309, *c*). The city called קִיר חֲרֶשֶׂת here and Isa. xvi. 7, and קִיר חֶרֶשׂ in Isa. xvi. 11 and Jer. xlviii. 31, 36, *i.e.* probably city of potsherds, is called elsewhere קִיר מוֹאָב, the citadel of Moab (Isa. xv. 1), as the principal fortress of the land (in the Chaldee Vers. כְּרַכָּא דְמוֹאָב), and still exists under the name of *Kerak*, with a strong castle built by the Crusaders, upon a lofty and steep chalk rock, surrounded by a deep and narrow valley, which runs westward under the name of Wady Kerak and falls into the Dead Sea (*vid.* Burckhardt, *Syr.* pp. 643

sqq., C. v. Raumer, *Pal.* pp. 271, 272). This fortress the allied kings besieged. "The slingers surrounded and smote it," *i.e.* bombarded it.—Ver. 26. When the king of Moab saw that the battle was too strong for him, he attempted to fight a way through the beseigers with 700 men with drawn swords (לְהַבְקִיעַ, lit. to split them) to the king of Edom, *i.e.* on the side which was held by this king, from whom he probably hoped that he should meet with the weakest resistance.—Ver. 27. But when this attempt failed, in his desperation he took his first-born son, who was to succeed him as king, and offered him as a sacrifice upon the wall, *i.e.* in the sight of the besiegers, not to the God of Israel (Joseph., Ephr. Syr., etc.), but to his own god Camos (see at 1 Kings xi. 7), to procure help from him by appeasing his wrath; just as the heathen constantly sought to appease the wrath of their gods by human sacrifices on the occasion of great calamities (*vid.* Euseb. *præpar. ev.* iv. 16, and E. v. Lasaulx, *die Sühnopfer der Griechen und Römer*, pp. 8 sqq.).—"And there was (came) great wrath upon Israel, and they departed from him (the king of Moab) and returned into their land." As הָיָה קֶצֶף עַל is used of the divine wrath or judgment, which a man brings upon himself by sinning, in every other case in which the phrase occurs, we cannot understand it here as signifying the "human indignation," or ill-will, which broke out among the besieged (Budd., Schulz, and others). The meaning is: this act of abomination, to which the king of the Moabites had been impelled by the extremity of his distress, brought a severe judgment from God upon Israel. The besiegers, that is to say, felt the wrath of God, which they had brought upon themselves by occasioning human sacrifice, which is strictly forbidden in the law (Lev. xviii. 21, xx. 3), either inwardly in their conscience or in some outwardly visible signs, so that they gave up the further prosecution of the siege and the conquest of the city, without having attained the object of the expedition, namely, to renew the subjugation of Moab under the power of Israel.

CHAP. IV. ELISHA WORKS SEVERAL MIRACLES.

From ch. iv.-ch. viii. 6 there follows a series of miracles on the part of Elisha, which both proved this prophet to be the continuer of the work which Elijah had begun, of converting Israel from the service of Baal to the service of the living God, and also manifested the beneficent fruits of the zeal of Elijah for the honour of the Lord of Sabaoth in the midst of the idolatrous generation of his time, partly in the view which we obtain from several of these accounts of the continuance and prosperity of the schools of the prophets, and partly in the attitude of Elisha towards the godly in the land as well as towards Joram the king, the son of the idolatrous Ahab, and in the extension of his fame beyond the limits of Israel. (See the remarks on the labours of both prophets at pp. 229 sqq, and those on the schools of the prophets at 1 Sam. xix. 24.)—All the miracles described in this section belong to the reign of Joram king of Israel. They are not all related, however, in chronological order, but the chronology is frequently disregarded for the purpose of grouping together events which are homogeneous in their nature. This is evident, not only from the fact that (*a*) several of these accounts are attached quite loosely to one another without any particle to indicate sequence (*vid.* ch. iv. 1, 38; 42, v. 1, vi. 8, and viii. 1), and (*b*) we have first of all those miracles which were performed for the good of the scholars of the prophets and of particular private persons (ch. iv.–vi. 7), and then such works of the prophet as bore more upon the political circumstances of the nation, and of the king as the leader of the nation (ch. vi. 8–vii. 20), but also from the circumstance that in the case of some of these facts you cannot fail to perceive that their position is regulated by their substantial relation to what precedes or what follows, without any regard to the time at which they occurred. Thus, for example, the occurrence described in ch. viii. 1–6, which should undoubtedly stand before ch. v. so far as the chronology is concerned, is placed at the end of the miracles which Elisha wrought for king Joram, simply because it exhibits in the clearest manner the salutary fruit of what he had done. And so, again, the account of Naaman the leper is placed in ch. v., although its proper position would be after ch. vi. 7, because it closes the series of miracles performed for and upon private persons, and the miracle was wrought upon a foreigner, so that the fame of the prophet had already penetrated into a foreign country; whereas in order of time it should either stand between vers. 23 and 24 of the sixth chapter (because the incursions of the flying parties of Syrians, to which ch. vi. 8–23 refers, had already taken place), or not till after the close of ch. vii. On the other hand, the partial separation of the miracles performed for the schools of the prophets (ch. iv. 1–7, 38–41, 42–44, and ch. vi. 1–7) can only be explained on chronological grounds; and this is favoured by the circumstance that the events inserted between are attached by a *Vav consec.*, which does indicate the order of sequence (ch. v. 8 sqq. and vi. 1 sqq.). Regarded as a whole, however, the section ch. iv. 1–viii. 6, which was no doubt taken from a prophetical monograph and inserted into the annals of the kings, is in its true chronological place, since the account in ch. iii. belongs to the earlier period of the history, and the events narrated from ch. viii. 7 onwards to the later period.

Vers. 1–7. THE WIDOW'S CRUSE OF OIL.—A poor widow of the scholars of the prophets complained to Elisha of her distress, namely, that a creditor was about to take her two sons as servants (slaves). The Mosaic law gave a creditor the right to claim the person and children of a debtor who was unable to pay, and they were obliged to serve him as slaves till the year of jubilee, when they were once more set free (Lev. xxv. 39, 40). When the prophet learned, on inquiry, that she had nothing in her house but a small flask of oil (אָסוּךְ, from סוּךְ, means an anointing flask, a small vessel for the oil necessary for anointing the body), he told her to beg of all her neighbours empty vessels, not a few (אַל־תַּמְעִיטִי, make not few, *sc.* to beg), and then to shut herself in with her sons, and to pour from her flask of oil into all these vessels till they were full, and then to sell this oil and pay her debt with the money, and use the rest for the maintenance of herself and her children. She was to close the house-door, that she might not be disturbed in her occupation by other people, and also generally to avoid all needless observation while the miracle was being performed. הַמָּלֵא תַּסִּיעִי, let that which is filled be put on one side, namely by the sons, who handed her the vessels, according to vers. 5 and 6, so that she was able to pour without intermission. The form מיצקת is a participle *Piel*, and is quite appropriate as an emphatic form; the *Keri* מוֹצֶקֶת (*Hiphil*) is an unnecessary alteration, especially as the *Hiphil* of יָצַק is הֵצִיק. וַיַּעֲמֹד הַשֶּׁמֶן, then the oil stood, *i.e.* it ceased to flow. The *asyndeton* וְאַתְּ בָּנַיִכִי is very harsh, and the *Vav copul.* has probably dropped out. With the alteration proposed by L. de Dieu, viz. of וְאַתְּ into וְאֵת, "live with thy sons," the verb תִּחְיִי would necessarily stand first (Thenius).

Vers. 8–37. THE SHUNAMMITE AND HER SON.—Ver. 8. When Elisha was going one day (lit. *the* day, *i.e.* at that time, then) to *Shunem* (*Solam*, at the south-western foot of the Lesser Hermon; see at 1 Kings i. 3), a wealthy woman (גְּדוֹלָה as in 1 Sam. xxv. 2, etc.) constrained him to eat at her house; whereupon, as often as he passed by that place in his subsequent journeys from Carmel to Jezreel and back, he was accustomed to call upon her (סוּר as in Gen. xix. 2).—Vers. 9, 10. The woman then asked her husband to build a small upper chamber for this holy man of God, and to furnish it with the necessary articles of furniture (viz. bed, table, seat, and lamp), that he might always turn in at their house. עֲלִיַּת־קִיר is either a walled upper chamber, *i.e.* one built with brick and not with wooden walls (Cler., Then.), or an upper chamber built upon the wall of the house (Ges.).—Vers. 11–13. After some time, when Elisha had spent the night in the chamber provided for him, he wanted to make some acknowledgment to his hostess for the love which she had shown him, and told his servant Gehazi to call her, and say to her: "Thou hast taken all this care for us, what shall I do to thee? Hast thou (anything) to say to the king or the chief captain?" *i.e.* hast thou any wish that I could convey to them, and intercede for thee? There is something striking here in the fact that Elisha did not address the woman himself, as she was standing before him, but told his servant to announce to her his willingness to make some return for what she had done. This was, probably, simply from a regard to the great awe which she had of the "holy man of God" (ver. 9), and to inspire her with courage to give expression to the wishes of her heart.[1] She answered: "I dwell among my people," *i.e.* not, I merely belong to the people (Thenius), but, I live quietly and peaceably among my countrymen, so that I have no need for any intercession with the king and great men of the kingdom. *'Απραγμοσύνῃ χαίρω, καὶ εἰρηνικῶς διάγω καὶ πρός τινα ἀμφισβήτησιν οὐκ ἀνέχομαι* (Theodoret).—Vers. 14–16. When Elisha conversed with Gehazi still further on the matter, the latter said: "But she has no son, and her husband is old." Elisha then had her called again, and told her when she had entered the door: "At this time a year hence (כָּעֵת חַיָּה, lit. at the time when it revives again; see at Gen. xviii. 10) thou wilt embrace a son." The same favour was to be granted to the Shunammite as that which Sarah had received in her old age, that she might learn that the God of Abraham still ruled in and for Israel. She replied: "No, my lord, thou man of God," אַל־תְּכַזֵּב, *i.e.* do not excite in thy servant any deceptive hopes. —Ver. 17. But however incredible this promise might appear to her, as it had formerly done to Sarah (Gen. xviii. 12, 13), it was fulfilled at the appointed time (cf. Gen. xxi. 2).—Vers. 18-20. But even the faith of the pious woman was soon to be put to the test, and to be confirmed by a still more glorious revelation of the omnipotence of the Lord, who works through the medium of His prophets. When the child presented to her by God had grown up into a lad, he complained one day to the reapers in the field of a violent headache, saying to his father, "My head, my head!" He was then taken home to his mother, and died at noon upon her knees, no doubt from inflammation of the brain produced by a sunstroke.—Vers. 21-23. The mother took the dead child at once up to the chamber built for Elisha, laid it upon the bed of the man of God, and shut the door behind her; she then asked her husband, without telling him of the death of the boy, to send a young man with a she-ass, that she might ride as quickly as possible to the man of God; and when her husband asked her, "Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day, since it is neither new moon nor Sabbath?"[1] she replied, *shalom; i.e.* either "it is all well," or "never mind." For this word, which is used in reply to a question after one's health (see ver. 26), is apparently also used, as Clericus has correctly observed, when the object is to avoid giving a definite answer to any one, and yet at the same time to satisfy him.—Vers. 24, 25. She then rode without stopping, upon the animal driven by the young man, to Elisha at mount Carmel. אַל־תַּעֲצָר־לִי לִרְכֹּב, literally, do not hinder me from riding.—Vers. 25–27. When the prophet saw her מִנֶּגֶד (from the opposite), that is to say, saw her coming in the distance, and recognised her as the Shunammite, he sent Gehazi to meet her, to ask her about her own health and that of her husband and child. She answered, *shalom, i.e.* well, that she might not be detained by any further discussion, and came to the prophet and embraced his feet, to pray for the help of the "holy man of God." Gehazi wanted to thrust her away, "because it seemed to him an immodest importunity to wish to urge the prophet in such a way as this, and as it were to compel him" (Seb. Schm.); but the prophet said, "Let her alone, for her soul is troubled, and Jehovah has hidden it from me and has not told me."[1]—Ver. 28. The pious woman then uttered this complaint to the prophet: "Did I ask a son of the Lord? Did I not say, Do not deceive me?". What had happened to her she did not say,—a fact which may easily be explained on psychological grounds from her deep sorrow,—but Elisha could not fail to discover it from what she said.—Ver. 29. He therefore directed his servant Gehazi: "Gird thy loins and take thy staff in thy hand and go: if thou meet any one, thou wilt not salute him; and if any one salute thee, thou wilt not answer him; and lay my staff upon the face of the boy." The object of this command neither to salute nor to return salutations by the way, was not merely to ensure the greatest haste (Thenius and many others), inasmuch as the people of the East lose a great deal of time in prolonged salutations (Niebuhr, *Beschr. v. Arab.* p. 48),[2] but the prophet wished thereby to preclude at the very outset the possibility of attributing the failure of Gehazi's attempt to awaken the child to any external or accidental circumstance of this kind. For since it is inconceivable that the prophet should have adopted a wrong method, that is to say, should have sent Gehazi with the hope that he would restore the dead boy to life, his only intention in sending the servant must have been to give to the Shunammite and her family, and possibly also to Gehazi himself, a practical proof that the power to work miracles was not connected in any magical way with his person or his staff, but that miracles as works of divine omnipotence could only be wrought through faith and prayer; not indeed with the secondary intention of showing that he alone could work miracles, and so of increasing his own importance (Köster), but to purify the faith of the godly from erroneous ideas, and elevate them from superstitious reliance upon his own human person to true reliance upon the Lord God. —Ver. 30. The mother of the boy does not appear, indeed, to have anticipated any result from the measures adopted by Elisha; for she swears most solemnly that she will not leave him. But the question arises, whether this urging of the prophet to come himself and help arose from doubt as to the result of Gehazi's mission, or whether it was not rather an involuntary utterance of her excessive grief, and of the warmest wish of her maternal heart to see her beloved child recalled to life. We may probably infer the latter from the fulfilment of her request by Elisha.—Ver. 31. Gehazi did as he was commanded, but the dead child did not come to life again; the prophet's staff worked no miracle. "There was no sound and no attention," *i.e.* the dead one gave no sign of life. This is the meaning of אֵין קוֹל וְאֵין קָשֶׁב both here and 1 Kings xviii. 29, where it is used of dead idols. The attempt of Gehazi to awaken the child was unsuccessful, not *propter fidem ipsi a muliere non adhibitam* (Seb. Schm.), nor because of the vainglory of Gehazi himself, but simply to promote in the godly of Israel true faith in the Lord. —Vers. 32–35. Elisha then entered the house, where the boy was lying dead upon his bed, and shut the door behind them both (*i.e.* himself and the dead child), and prayed to the Lord. He then lay down upon the boy, so that his mouth, his eyes, and his hands lay upon the mouth, eyes, and hands of the child, bowing down over him (גָּהַר; see at 1 Kings xviii. 42); and the flesh (the body) of the child became warm. He then turned round, *i.e.* turned away from the boy, went once up and down in the room, and bowed himself over him again; whereupon the boy sneezed seven times, and then opened his eyes. This raising of the dead boy to life does indeed resemble the raising of the dead by Elijah (1 Kings xvii. 20 sqq.); but it differs so obviously in the manner in which it was effected, that we may see at once from this that Elisha did not possess the double measure of the spirit of Elijah. It is true that Elijah stretched himself three times upon the dead child, but at his prayer the dead returned immediately to life, whereas in the case of Elisha the restoration to life was a gradual thing.[1] And they both differ essentially from the raising of the dead by Christ, who recalled the dead to life by one word of His omnipotence (Mark v. 39–42; Luke vii. 13–15; John xi. 43, 44), a sign that He was the only-begotten Son of God, to whom the Father gave to have life in Himself, even as the Father has life in Himself (John v. 25 sqq.), in whose name the Apostle Peter also was able through prayer to recall the dead Tabitha to life, whereas Elisha and Elijah had only to prophesy by word and deed of the future revelation of the glory of God.—Vers. 36, 37. After the restoration of the boy to life, Elisha had his mother called and gave her back her son, for which she fell at his feet with thanksgiving.

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[1] The conjecture that Elisha would not speak to her directly for the sake of maintaining his dignity, or that the historian looked upon such conversation with women as unbecoming in a teacher of the law (Thenius), is already proved to be untenable by vers. 15, 16, where Elisha does speak to her directly.

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[1] From these words, Theod., Kimchi, C. a Lap., Vatabl., and others have drawn the correct conclusion, that the pious in Israel were accustomed to meet together at the prophets' houses for worship and edification, on those days which were appointed in the law (Lev. xxiii. 3; Num. xxviii. 11 sqq.) for the worship of God; and from this Hertz and Hengstenberg have still further inferred, that in the kingdom of the ten tribes not only were the Sabbath and new moons kept, as is evident from Amos viii. 5 also, but the prophets supplied the pious in that kingdom with a substitute for the missing Levitical priesthood.

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[1] All that we can infer from these last words with regard to the nature of prophecy, is that the *donum propheticum* did not involve a supernatural revelation of every event.

[2] Or, as C. a Lap. supposes: "that Gehazi might avoid all distraction of either eyes or ears, and prepare himself entirely by prayers for the accomplishment of so great a miracle." Theodoret explains it in a similar manner: "He knew that he was vainglorious and fond of praise, and that he would be sure to tell the reason of his journey to those who should meet him by the way. And vainglory is a hindrance to thaumaturgy."

Vers. 38–41. Elisha makes Uneatable Food Wholesome.—Ver. 38. When Elisha had returned to Gilgal, the seat of a school of the prophets (see at ch. ii. 1), *i.e.* had come thither once more on his yearly circuit, during the famine which prevailed in the land (see at ch. viii. 1), and the prophets' scholars sat before him (the teacher and master), he directed his servant (*i.e.* probably not Gehazi, but the pupil who waited upon him) to put the large pot to the fire and boil a dish for the pupils of the prophets. שְׁפַת answers to the German *beisetzen*, which is used for placing a vessel *upon* the fire (cf. Ezek. xxiv. 3).—Ver. 39. One (of these pupils) then went to the field to gather vegetables (אֹרֹת, *olera:* for the different explanations of this word see Celsii *Hierobot.* i. 459 sqq., and Ges. *Thes.* p. 56), and found גֶּפֶן שָׂדֶה, *i.e.* not wild vines, but wild creepers (Luther), field-creepers resembling vines; and having gathered his lap full of wild cucumbers, took them home and cut them into the vegetable pot, because they did not know them. פַּקֻּעֹת is rendered in the ancient versions *colocynths* (LXX. *πολυπὴ ἀγρία*, *i.e.*, according to Suid., *colocynthis*), whereas Gesenius (*Thes.* p. 1122), Winer, and others, following Celsius (*l.c.* i. 393 sqq.), have decided in favour of wild cucumbers, a fruit resembling an acorn, or, according to Oken, a green fleshy fruit of almost a finger's length and an inch thick, which crack with a loud noise, when quite ripe, on very gentle pressure, spirting out both juice and seeds, and have a very-bitter taste. The reason for this decision is, that the peculiarity mentioned answers to the etymon פָּקַע, to split, in Syr. and Chald. to crack. Nevertheless the rendering given by the old translators is apparently the more correct of the two; for the colocynths also belong to the genus of the cucumbers, creep upon the ground, and are a round yellow fruit of the size of a large orange, and moreover are extremely bitter, producing colic, and affecting the nerves. The form of this fruit is far more suitable for oval architectural ornaments (פְּקָעִים, 1 Kings vi. 18, vii. 24) than that of the wild cucumber.—Ver. 40. The extremely bitter flavour of the fruit so alarmed the pupils of the prophets when they began to eat of the dish, that they cried out, "Death in the pot," and therefore thought the fruit was poison. If eaten in any large quantity, colocynths might really produce death: *vid.* Dioscorid. iv. 175 (178).—Ver. 41. Elisha then had some meal brought and poured it into the pot, after which the people were able to eat of the dish, and there was no longer anything injurious in the pot. וּקְחוּ, then take, וּ denoting sequence in thought (*vid.* Ewald, § 348, *a*). The meal might somewhat modify the bitterness and injurious qualities of the vegetable, but could not take them entirely away; the author of the *Exegetical Handbook* therefore endeavours to get rid of the miracle, by observing that Elisha may have added something else. The meal, the most wholesome food of man, was only the earthly substratum for the working of the Spirit, which proceeded from Elisha, and made the noxious food perfectly wholesome.

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[1] The raising of the dead by Elijah and Elisha, especially by the latter, has been explained by many persons as being merely a revivification by magnetic manipulations or by the force of animal magnetism (even Passavant and Ennemoser adopt this view). But no dead person was ever raised to life by animal magnetism; and the assumption that the two boys were only apparently dead is at variance with the distinct words of the text, in addition to which, both Elisha and Elijah accomplished the miracle through their prayer, as is stated as clearly as possible both here (ver. 33) and also at 1 Kings xvii. 21, 22.

Vers. 42–44. FEEDING OF A HUNDRED PUPILS OF THE PROPHETS WITH TWENTY BARLEY LOAVES.—A man of *Baal-Shalisha* (a place in the land of *Shalisha*, the country to the west of Gilgal, Jiljilia; see at 1 Sam. ix. 4) brought the prophet as first-fruits twenty barley loaves and גֶּרֶשׂ כַּרְמֶל=כַּרְמֶל, *i.e.* roasted ears of corn (see the Comm. on Lev. ii. 14), in his sack (צִקְלוֹן, *ἀπ. λεγ.*, sack or pocket). Elisha ordered this present to be given to the people, *i.e.* to the pupils of the prophets who dwelt in one common home, for them to eat; and when his servant made this objection: "How shall I set this (this little) before a hundred men?" he repeated his command, "Give it to the people, that they may eat; for thus hath the Lord spoken: They will eat and leave" (אָכוֹל וְהוֹתֵר, *infin. absol.*; see Ewald, § 328, *a*); which actually was the case. That twenty barley loaves and a portion of roasted grains of corn were not a sufficient quantity to satisfy a hundred men, is evident from the fact that one man was able to carry the whole of this gift in a sack, and still more so from the remark of the servant, which shows that there was no proportion between the whole of this quantity and the food required by a hundred persons. In this respect the food, which was so blessed by the word of the Lord that a hundred men were satisfied by so small a quantity and left some over, forms a type of the miraculous feeding of the people by Christ (Matt. xiv. 16 sqq., xv. 36, 37; John vi. 11, 12); though there was this distinction between them, that the prophet Elisha did not produce the miraculous increase of the food, but merely predicted it. The object, therefore, in communicating this account is not to relate another miracle of Elisha, but to show how the Lord cared for His servants, and assigned to them that which had been appropriated in the law to the Levitical priests, who were to receive, according to Deut. xviii. 4, 5, and Num. xviii. 13, the first-fruits of corn, new wine, and oil. This account therefore furnishes fresh evidence that the godly men in Israel did not regard the worship introduced by Jeroboam (his state-church) as legitimate worship, but sought and found in the schools of the prophets a substitute for the lawful worship of God (*vid.* Hengstenberg, *Beitrr.* ii. S. 136 f.).

CHAP. V. CURING OF THE LEPROSY OF NAAMAN THE SYRIAN, AND PUNISHMENT OF GEHAZI.

Vers. 1–19. Curing of Naaman from Leprosy.—Ver. 1. *Naaman*, the commander-in-chief of the Syrian king, who was a very great man before his lord, *i.e.* who held a high place in the service of his king and was greatly distinguished (נְשֻׂא פָנִים, cf. Isa. iii. 3, ix. 14), because God had given the Syrians salvation (victory) through him, was as a warrior afflicted with leprosy. The has not dropped out before מְצֹרָע, nor has the copula been omitted for the purpose of sharpening the antithesis (Thenius), for the appeal to Ewald, § 354, *a*, proves nothing, since the passages quoted there are of a totally different kind; but גִּבּוֹר חַיִל is a second predicate: the man was as a brave warrior leprous. There is an allusion here to the difference between the Syrians and the Israelites in their views of leprosy. Whereas in Israel lepers were excluded from human society (see at Lev. xiii. and xiv.), in Syria a man afflicted with leprosy could hold a very high state-office in the closest association with the king.—Vers. 2, 3. And in Naaman's house before his wife, *i.e.* in her service, there was an Israelitish maiden, whom the Syrians had carried off in a marauding expedition (יָצְאוּ גְדוּדִים: „they had gone out in (as) marauding bands). She said to her mistress: "O that my lord were before the prophet at Samaria! (where Elisha had a house, ch. vi. 32,) he would free him from his leprosy." אָסַף מִצָּרַעַת, to receive (again) from leprosy, in the sense of "to heal," may be explained from Num. xii. 14, 15, where אָסַף is applied to the reception of Miriam into the camp again, from which she had been excluded on account of her leprosy.—Vers. 4, 5. When Naaman related this to his lord (the king), he told him to go to Samaria furnished with a letter to the king of Israel; and he took with him rich presents as compensation for the cure he was to receive, viz. ten talents of silver, about 25,000 thalers (£3750—TR.); 6000 shekels (= two talents) of gold, about 50,000 thalers (£7500); and ten changes of clothes, a present still highly valued in the East (see the Comm. on Gen. xlv. 22). This very large present was quite in keeping with Naaman's position, and was not too great for the object in view, namely, his deliverance from a malady which would be certainly, even if slowly, fatal.—Vers. 6, 7. When the king of Israel (Joram) received the letter of the Syrian king on Naaman's arrival, and read therein that he was to cure Naaman of his leprosy (וְעַתָּה, and now,—showing in the letter the transition to the main point, which is the only thing communicated here; cf. Ewald, § 353, *b*), he rent his clothes in alarm, and exclaimed, "Am I God, to be able to kill and make alive?" *i.e.* am I omnipotent like God? (cf. Deut. xxxii. 39; 1 Sam. ii. 6;) "for he sends to me to cure a man of his leprosy." The words of the letter וַאֲסַפְתּוֹ, "so cure him," were certainly not so insolent in their meaning as Joram supposed, but simply meant: have him cured, as thou hast a wonder-working prophet; the Syrian king imagining, according to his heathen notions of priests and *goëtes,* that Joram could do what he liked with his prophets and their miraculous powers. There was no ground, therefore, for the suspicion which Joram expressed: "for only observe and see, that he seeks occasion against me." הִתְאַנֶּה, to seek occasion, *sc.* for a quarrel (cf. Judg. xiv. 4).—Ver. 8. When Elisha heard of this, he reproved the king for his unbelieving alarm, and told him to send the man to him, "that he may learn that there is a prophet in Israel."—Vers. 9, 10. When Naaman stopped with his horses and chariot before the house of Elisha, the prophet sent a messenger out to him to say, "Go and wash thyself seven times in the Jordan, and thy flesh will return to thee, *i.e.* become sound, and thou wilt be clean." יָשֹׁב, return, inasmuch as the flesh had been changed through the leprosy into festering matter and putrefaction. The reason why Elisha did not go out to Naaman himself, is not to be sought for in the legal prohibition of intercourse with lepers, as Ephraem Syrus and many others suppose, nor in his fear of the leper, as Thenius thinks, nor even in the wish to magnify the miracle in the eyes of Naaman, as C. a Lapide imagines, but simply in Naaman's state of mind. This is evident from his exclamation concerning the way in which he was treated. Enraged at his treatment, he said to his servant (vers. 11, 12): "I thought, he will come out to me and stand and call upon the name of Jehovah his God, and go with his hand over the place (*i.e.* move his hand to and fro over the diseased places), and take away the leprosy." הַמְּצוֹרָע, the leprous = the disease of leprosy, the scabs and ulcers of leprosy. "Are not *Abana* and *Pharpar,* the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? (for the combination of טוֹב with נַהֲרוֹת, see Ewald, § 174, *f.*) Should I not bathe in them, and become clean?" With these words he turned back, going away in a rage. Naaman had been greatly strengthened in the pride, which is innate in every natural man, by the exalted position which he held in the state, and in which every one bowed before him, and served him in the most reverential manner, with the exception of his lord the king; and he was therefore to receive a salutary lesson of humiliation, and at the same time was also to learn that he owed his cure not to any magic touch from the prophet, but solely to the power of God working through him.—Of the two rivers of Damascus, *Abana* or *Amana* (the reading of the *Keri* with the interchange of the labials ב and מ, see Song of Sol. iv. 8) is no doubt the present *Barada* or *Burady* (بردى, *i.e.* the cold river), the *Chrysorrhoas* (Strabo, xvi. p. 755; Plin. *h. n.* 18 or 16), which rises in the table-land to the south of Zebedany, and flows through this city itself, and then dividing into two arms, enters two small lakes about 4¾ hours to the east of the city. The *Pharpar* is probably the only other independent river of any importance in the district of Damascus, namely, the *Avaj*, which arises from the union of several brooks around *Sa'sa'*, and flows through the plain to the south of Damascus into the lake Heijâny (see Rob. *Bibl. Researches*, p. 444). The water of the Barada is beautiful, clear and transparent (Rob.), whereas the water of the Jordan is turbid, "of a clayey colour" (Rob. *Pal.* ii. p. 256); and therefore Naaman might very naturally think that his own native rivers were better than the Jordan.—Ver. 13. His servants then addressed him in a friendly manner, and said, "My father, if the prophet had said to thee a great thing (*i.e.* a thing difficult to carry out), shouldst thou not have done it? how much more then, since he has said to thee, Wash, and thou wilt be clean?" אָבִי, my father, is a confidential expression arising from childlike piety, as in ch. vi. 21 and 1 Sam. xxiv. 12; and the etymological jugglery which traces אָבִי from לוּ = לְוִי = לְבִי (Ewald, *Gr.* § 358, Anm.), or from אִם (Thenius), is quite superfluous (see Delitzsch *on Job*, vol. ii. p. 265, transl.).—דָּבָר גָּדוֹל . . . דִּבֶּר is a conditional clause without אִם (see Ewald, § 357, *b*), and the object is placed first for the sake of emphasis (according to Ewald, § 309, *a*). אַף כִּי, how much more (see Ewald, § 354, *c*), *sc.* shouldst thou do what is required, since he has ordered thee so small and easy a thing.—Ver. 14. Naaman then went down (from Samaria to the Jordan) and dipped in Jordan seven times, and his flesh became sound (יָשֹׁב as in ver. 10) like the flesh of a little boy. *Seven times*, to show that the healing was a work of God, for seven is the stamp of the works of God.—Vers. 15, 16. After the cure had been effected, he returned with all his train to the man of God with this acknowledgment: "Behold, I have found that there is no God in all the earth except in Israel," and with the request that he would accept a blessing (a present, בְּרָכָה, as in Gen. xxxiii. 11, 1 Sam. xxv. 27, etc.) from him; which the prophet, however, stedfastly refused, notwithstanding all his urging, that he might avoid all appearance of selfishness, by which the false prophets were actuated.—Vers. 17, 18. Then Naaman said: וְלֹא, "and not" = and if not, καὶ εἰ μή (LXX.; not "and O," according to Ewald, § 358, *b*, Anm.), "let there be given to thy servant (= to me) two mules' burden of earth (on the construction see Ewald, § 287, *h*), for thy servant will no more make (offer) burnt-offerings and slain-offerings to any other gods than Jehovah. May Jehovah forgive thy servant in this thing, when my lord (the king of Syria) goeth into the house of Rimmon, to fall down (worship) there, and he supports himself upon my hand, that I fall down (with him) in the house of Rimmon; if I (thus) fall down in the house of Rimmon, may," etc. It is very evident from Naaman's explanation, "for thy servant," etc., that he wanted to take a load of earth with him out of the land of Israel, that he might be able to offer sacrifice upon it to the God of Israel, because he was still a slave to the polytheistic superstition, that no god could be worshipped in a proper and acceptable manner except in his own land, or upon an altar built of the earth of his own land. And because Naaman's knowledge of God was still adulterated with superstition, he was not yet prepared to make an unreserved confession before men of his faith in Jehovah as the only true God, but hoped that Jehovah would forgive him if he still continued to join outwardly in the worship of idols, so far as his official duty required. *Rimmon* (*i.e.* the pomegranate) is here, and probably also in the local name *Hadad-rimmon* (Zech. xii. 11), the name of the supreme deity of the Damascene Syrians, and probably only a contracted form of *Hadad-rimmon*, since *Hadad* was the supreme deity or sun-god of the Syrians (see at 2 Sam. viii. 3), signifying the sun-god with the modification expressed by Rimmon, which has been differently interpreted according to the supposed derivation of the word. Some derive the name from רָמַם = רוּם, as the supreme god of heaven, like the Ἐλιοῦν of *Sanchun.* (Cler., Seld., Ges. *thes.* p. 1292); others from רִמּוֹן, a pomegranate, as a personification of the power of generation, as *numen naturæ omnia fœcundantis*, since the pomegranate with its abundance of seeds is used in the symbolism of both Oriental and Greek mythology along with the Phallus as a symbol of the generative power (*vid.* Bähr, *Symbolik*, ii. pp. 122, 123), and is also found upon Assyrian monuments (*vid.* Layard, *Nineveh and its Remains*, p. 343); others again, with less probability, from רָמָה, *jaculari*, as the sun-god who vivifies and fertilizes the earth with his rays, like the *ἑκηβόλος Ἀπόλλων*; and others from רַמַּם = رمّ, *computruit*, as the dying winter sun (according to Movers and Hitzig; see Leyrer in Herzog's *Cyclopædia*).—The words "and he supports himself upon my hand" are not to be understood literally, but are a general expression denoting the service which Naaman had to render as the aide-de-camp to his king (cf. ch. vii. 2, 17). For the Chaldaic form הִשְׁתַּחֲוָיָתִי, see Ewald, § 156, *a*.—In the repetition of the words "if I fall down in the temple of Rimmon," etc., he expresses the urgency of his wish.—Ver. 19. Elisha answered, "Go in peace," wishing the departing Syrian the peace of God upon the road, without thereby either approving or disapproving the religious conviction which he had expressed. For as Naaman had not asked permission to go with his king into the temple of Rimmon, but had simply said, might Jehovah forgive him or be indulgent with him in this matter, Elisha could do nothing more, without a special command from God, than commend the heathen, who had been brought to belief in the God of Israel as the true God by the miraculous cure of his leprosy, to the further guidance of the Lord and of His grace.[1]

Vers. 20–27. PUNISHMENT OF GEHAZI.—Vers. 20–22. When Naaman had gone a stretch of the way (כִּבְרַת אֶרֶץ, ver 19; see at Gen. xxxv. 16), there arose in Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, the desire for a portion of the presents of the Syrian which his master had refused (חַי יי׳ כִּי אִם, as truly as Jehovah liveth, assuredly I run after him; כִּי אִם as in 1 Sam. xxv. 34). He therefore hastened after him; and as Naaman no sooner saw Gehazi running after him than he sprang quickly down from his chariot in reverential gratitude to the prophet (יִפֹּל as in Gen. xxiv. 64), he asked in the name of Elisha for a talent of silver and two changes of raiment, professedly for two poor pupils of the prophets, who had come to the prophet from Mount Ephraim.—Ver. 23. But Naaman forced him to accept two talents (הוֹאֵל קָח, be pleased to take; and כִּכָּרַיִם, with the dual ending, *ne percat indicium numeri*—Winer) in two purses, and two changes of raiment, and out of politeness had these presents carried by two of his servants before Gehazi.—Ver. 24. When Gehazi came to the hill (הָעֹפֶל, the well-known hill before the city) he took the presents from the bearers, and dismissing the men, laid them up in the house. פָּקַד בְּ, to bring into safe custody.—Vers. 25, 26. But when he entered his master's presence again, he asked him, "Whence (comest thou), Gehazi?" and on his returning the lying answer that he had not been anywhere, charged him with all that he had done. לֹא לִבִּי הָלַךְ, "had not my heart gone, when the man turned from his chariot to meet thee?" This is the simplest and the only correct interpretation of these difficult words, which have been explained in very different ways. Theodoret (*οὐχὶ ἡ καρδία μου ἦν μετὰ σοῦ*) and the Vulgate (*nonne cor meum in præsenti erat, quando*, etc.) have already given the same explanation, and so far as the sense is concerned it agrees with that adopted by Thenius: was I not (in spirit) away (from here) and present (there)? הָלַךְ stands in a distinct relation to the לֹא הָלַךְ of Gehazi.—הַעֵת וגו׳: "is it time to take silver, and clothes, and olive-trees, and vineyards, and sheep and oxen, and servants and maidens?" *i.e.* is this the time, when so many hypocrites pretend to be prophets from selfishness and avarice, and bring the prophetic office into contempt with unbelievers, for a servant of the true God to take money and goods from a non-Israelite for that which God has done through him, that he may acquire property and luxury for himself?—Ver. 27. "And let the leprosy of Naaman cleave to thee and to thy seed for ever." This punishment took effect immediately. Gehazi went out from Elisha covered with leprosy as if with snow (cf. Ex. iv. 6, Num. xii. 10). It was not too harsh a punishment that the leprosy taken from Naaman on account of his faith in the living God, should pass to Gehazi on account of his departure from the true God. For it was not his avarice only that was to be punished, but the abuse of the prophet's name for the purpose of carrying out his selfish purpose, and his misrepresentation of the prophet.[1]

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[1] Most of the earlier theologians found in Elisha's words a direct approval of the religious conviction expressed by Naaman and his attitude towards idolatry; and since they could not admit that a prophet would have permitted a heathen alone to participate in idolatrous ceremonies, endeavoured to get rid of the consequence resulting from it, viz. *licitam ergo esse Christianis συμφώνησιν πιστοῦ μετὰ ἀπιστοῦ, seu symbolizationem et communicationem cum ceremonia idololatrica*, either by appealing to the use of הִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת and to the distinction between *incurvatio regis voluntaria et religiosa* (real worship) and *incurvatio servilis et coacta Naemani, quæ erat politica et civilis* (mere prostration from civil connivance), or by the ungrammatical explanation that Naaman merely spoke of what he had already done, not of what he would do in future (*vid.* Pfeiffer, *Dub. vex.* p. 445 sqq., and J. Meyer, *ad Seder Olam*, p. 904 sqq., Budd., and others).—Both are unsatisfactory. The dreaded consequence falls of itself if we only distinguish between the times of the old covenant and those of the new. Under the old covenant the time had not yet come in which the heathen, who came to the knowledge of the true deity of the God of Israel, could be required to break off from all their heathen ways, unless they would formally enter into fellowship with the covenant nation.

CHAP. VI. 1–23. THE FLOATING IRON. THE SYRIANS SMITTEN WITH BLINDNESS.

Vers. 1–7. ELISHA CAUSES AN IRON AXE TO FLOAT.—The following account gives us an insight into the straitened life of the pupils of the prophets. Vers. 1–4. As the common dwelling-place had become too small for them, they resolved, with Elisha's consent, to build a new house, and went, accompanied by the prophet, to the woody bank of the Jordan to fell the wood that was required for the building. The place where the common abode had become too small is not given, but most of the commentators suppose it to have been Gilgal, chiefly from the erroneous assumption that the Gilgal mentioned in ch. ii. 1 was in the Jordan valley to the east of Jericho. Thenius only cites in support of this the reference in יֹשְׁבִים לְפָנֶיךָ (dwell with thee) to ch. iv. 38 ; but this decides nothing, as the pupils of the prophets sat before Elisha, or gathered together around their master in a common home, not merely in Gilgal, but also in Bethel and Jericho. We might rather think of Jericho, since Bethel and Gilgal (Jiljilia) were so far distant from the Jordan, that there is very little probability that a removal of the meeting-place to the Jordan, such as is indicated by נַעֲשֶׂה־לָּנוּ שָׁם מָקוֹם, would ever have been thought of from either of these localities.—Ver. 5. In the felling of the beams, the iron, *i.e.* the axe, of one of the pupils of the prophets fell into the water, at which he exclaimed with lamentation : "Alas, my lord (*i.e.* Elisha), and it was begged !" The sorrowful exclamation implied a petition for help. וְאֶת־הַבַּרְזֶל: "and as for the iron, it fell into the water;" so that even here אֵת does not stand before the nominative, but serves to place the noun in subjection to the clause (cf. Ewald, § 277, *a*). שָׁאוּל does not mean borrowed, but begged. The meaning to borrow is attributed to שָׁאַל from a misinterpretation of particular passages (see the Comm. on Ex. iii. 22). The prophets' pupil had begged the axe, because from his poverty he was unable to buy one, and hence the loss was so painful to him.—Vers. 6, 7. When he showed Elisha, in answer to his inquiry, the place where it had fallen, the latter cut off a stick and threw it thither (into the water) and made the iron flow, *i.e.* float (יָּצֵף from צוּף, to flow, as in Deut. xi. 4); whereupon the prophets' pupil picked the axe out of the water with his hand. The object of the miracle was similar to that of the stater in the fish's mouth (Matt. xvii. 27), or of the miraculous feeding, namely, to show how the Lord could relieve earthly want through the medium of His prophet. The natural interpretation of the miracle, which is repeated by Thenius, namely, that "Elisha struck the eye of the axe with the long stick which he thrust into the river, so that the iron was lifted by the wood," needs no refutation, since the raising of an iron axe by a long stick, so as to make it float in the water, is impossible according to the laws of gravitation.

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[1] "This was not the punishment of his immoderate δωροδοκίας (receiving of gifts) merely, but most of all of his lying. For he who seeks to deceive the prophet in relation to the things which belong to his office, is said to lie to the Holy Ghost, whose instruments the prophets are" (*vid.* Acts v. 3).—GROTIUS.

Vers. 8–23. Elisha's Action in the War with the Syrians.—Vers. 8–10. In a war which the Syrians carried on against the Israelitish king Joram (not Jehoahaz, as Ewald, *Gesch.* iii. p. 557, erroneously supposes), by sending flying parties into the land of Israel (cf. ver. 23), Elisha repeatedly informed king Joram of the place where the Syrians had determined to encamp, and thereby frustrated the plans of the enemy. אֶל־מְקוֹם . . . תַּחֲנֹתִי: "at the place of so and so shall my camp be." פְּלֹנִי אַלְמֹנִי as in 1 Sam. xxi. 3 (see at Ruth iv. 1). תַּחֲנוֹת, the encamping or the place of encampment (cf. Ewald, § 161, *a*), is quite appropriate, so that there is no need either for the alteration into תֵּחָבְאוּ, "ye shall hide yourselves" (Then.), or into תְּנַחֲתוּ, with the meaning which is arbitrarily postulated, "ye shall place an ambush" (Ewald, *Gesch.* iii. p. 558), or for the much simpler alteration into תַּחֲנוּ לִי, "pitch the camp for me" (Böttcher). The singular suffix in תַּחֲנֹתִי refers to the king as leader of the war: "my camp" = the camp of my army. "Beware of passing over (עֲבֹר) this place," *i.e.* of leaving it unoccupied, "for there have the Syrians determined to make their invasion." נְחִתִּים, from נָחֵת, going down, with *dagesh euphon.*, whereas Ewald (§ 187, *b*) is of opinion that נְחִתִּים, instead of being an intrans. part. *Kal*, might rather be a part. *Niph.* of חַת, which would not yield, however, any suitable meaning. Thenius renders מֵעֲבֹר, "to pass by this place," which would be grammatically admissible, but is connected with his conjecture concerning תַּחֲנֹתִי, and irreconcilable with ver. 10. When the king of Israel, according to ver. 10, sent to the place indicated on account of Elisha's information, he can only have sent troops to occupy it; so that when the Syrians arrived they found Israelitish troops there, and were unable to attack the place. There is nothing in the text about the Syrians bursting forth from their ambush. הִזְהִיר means to enlighten, instruct, but not to warn. נִשְׁמַר־שָׁם, "he took care there," *i.e.* he occupied the place with troops, to defend it against the Syrians, so that they were unable to do anything, "not once and not twice," *i.e.* several times.—Ver. 11. The king of the Syrians was enraged at this, and said to his servants, "Do ye not show me who of our men (leans) to the king of Israel?" *i.e.* takes his part. מִשֶּׁלָּנוּ = מֵאֲשֶׁר לָנוּ, probably according to an Aramæan dialect: see Ewald, 181, *b*, though he pronounces the reading incorrect, and would read מִכֻּלָּנוּ, but without any ground and quite unsuitably, as the king would thereby reckon himself among the traitors.—Vers. 12 sqq. Then one of the servants answered, "No, my lord king," *i.e.* it is not we who disclose thy plans to the king of Israel, "but Elisha the prophet tells him what thou sayest in thy bed-chamber;" whereupon the king of Syria inquired where the prophet lived, and sent a powerful army to Dothan, with horses and chariots, to take him prisoner there. *Dothan* (see Gen. xxxvii. 17), which according to the *Onom.* was twelve Roman miles to the north of Samaria, has been preserved under its old name in a *Tell* covered with ruins to the south-west of Jenin, on the caravan-road from Gilead to Egypt (see Rob. *Bibl. Res.* p. 158, and V. de Velde, *Journey*, i. pp. 273, 274).—Vers. 15–17. When Elisha's servant went out the next morning and saw the army, which had surrounded the town in the night, he said to the prophet, "Alas, my lord, how shall we do?" But Elisha quieted him, saying, "Fear not, for those with us are more than those with them." He then prayed that the Lord might open his servant's eyes, whereupon he saw the mountain upon which Dothan stood full of fiery horses and chariots round about Elisha. Opening the eyes was translation into the ecstatic state of clairvoyance, in which an insight into the invisible spirit-world was granted him. The fiery horses and chariots were symbols of the protecting powers of Heaven, which surrounded the prophet. The fiery form indicated the super-terrestrial origin of this host. Fire, as the most ethereal of all earthly elements, was the most appropriate substratum for making the spirit-world visible. The sight was based upon Jacob's vision (Gen. xxxii. 2), in which he saw a double army of angels encamped around him, at the time when he was threatened with danger from Esau.—Vers. 18–20. When the enemy came down to Elisha, he prayed to the Lord that He would smite them with blindness; and when this took place according to his word, he said to them, This is not the way and this is not the city; follow me, and I will lead you to the man whom ye are seeking; and led them to Samaria, which was about four hours' distance from Dothan, where their eyes were opened at Elisha's prayer, so that they saw where they had been led. וַיֵּרְדוּ אֵלָיו cannot be understood as referring to Elisha and his servant, who went down to the Syrian army, as J. H. Mich., Budd., F. v. Meyer, and Thenius, who wants to alter אֵלָיו into אֲלֵיהֶם, suppose, but must refer to the Syrians, who went down to the prophet, as is evident from what follows. For the assumption that the Syrians had stationed themselves below and round the mountain on which Dothan stood, and therefore would have had to come up to Elisha, need not occasion an unnatural interpretation of the words. It is true that Dothan stands upon an isolated hill in the midst of the plain; but on the eastern side it is enclosed by a range of hills, which project into the plain (see V. de Velde, *R.* i. p. 273). The Syrians who had been sent against Elisha had posted themselves on this range of hills, and thence they came *down* towards the town of Dothan, which stood on the hill, whilst Elisha went out of the town to meet them. It is true that Elisha's going out is not expressly mentioned, but in ver. 19 it is clearly presupposed. סַנְוֵרִים is mental blindness here, as in the similar case mentioned in Gen. xix. 11, that is to say, a state of blindness, in which, though a man has eyes that can see, he does not see correctly. Elisha's untruthful statement, "this is not the way," etc., is to be judged in the same manner as every other *ruse de guerre*, by which the enemy is deceived.—Vers. 21–23. Elisha forbade king Joram to slay the enemy that he had brought to him, because he had not taken them prisoners in war, and recommended him to treat them hospitably and then let them return to their lord. The object of the miracle would have been frustrated if the Syrians had been slain. For the intention was to show the Syrians that they had to do with a prophet of the true God, against whom no human power could be of any avail, that they might learn to fear the almighty God. Even when regarded from a political point of view, the prophet's advice was more likely to ensure peace than the king's proposal, as the result in ver. 23 clearly shows. The Syrians did not venture any more to invade the land of Israel with flying parties, from fear of the obvious protection of Israel by its God; though this did not preclude a regular war, like that related in the following account. For אָבִי see the Comm. on ch. v. 13. הַאֲשֶׁר שָׁבִיתָ וגו׳: "art thou accustomed to slay that which thou hast taken captive with sword and bow?" *i.e.* since thou dost not even slay those whom thou hast made prisoners in open battle, how wouldst thou venture to put these to death? יִכְרֶה לָהֶם כֵּרָה, he prepared them a meal. כָּרָה is a *denom.* from כֵּרָה, a meal, so called from the union of several persons, like *cœna* from *κοινή* (*vid.* Dietr. on Ges. *Lex. s. v.* כרה).

CHAP. VI. 24–VII. 20. ELISHA'S ACTION DURING A FAMINE IN SAMARIA.

Vers. 24–33. After this there arose so fearful a famine in Samaria on the occasion of a siege by Benhadad, that one mother complained to the king of another, because she would not keep her agreement to give up her son to be eaten, as she herself had already done.—Ver. 25. The famine became great—till an ass's head was worth eighty shekels of silver, and a quarter of a cab of dove's dung was worth five shekels. הָיָה בְּ, to become for = to be worth. The ass was an unclean animal, so that it was not lawful to eat its flesh. Moreover the head of an ass is the most inedible part of the animal. Eighty shekels were about seventy thalers (£10, 10s.—Tr.), or if the Mosaic bekas were called shekels in ordinary life, thirty-five thalers (£5, 5s.; see Bertheau, *Zur Gesch. der Isr.* p. 49). According to Thenius, a quarter of a cab is a sixth of a small Dresden measure (*Mässchen*), not quite ten Parisian cubic inches. Five shekels: more than four thalers (twelve shillings), or more than two thalers (six shillings). The *Chethîb* חריונים is to be read חֲרֵי יוֹנִים, *excrementa columbarum*, for which the *Keri* substitutes the euphemistic דִּיב יוֹנִים, *fluxus, profluvium columbarum.* The expression may be taken literally, since dung has been known to be collected for eating in times of terrible famine (*vid.* Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* v. 13, 7); but it may also be figuratively employed to signify a very miserable kind of food, as the Arabs call the *herba Alcali* اشنان, *i.e.* sparrow's dung, and the Germans call *Asa fœtida* Teufelsdreck. But there is no ground for thinking of wasted chick-pease, as Bochart (*Hieroz.* ii. p. 582, ed. Ros.) supposes (see, on the other hand, Celsii *Hierobot.* ii. p. 30 sqq.).[1] —Ver. 26. As the king was passing by upon the wall to conduct the defence, a woman cried to him for help; whereupon he replied: אַל־יוֹשִׁעֵךְ יי׳, "should Jehovah not help thee, whence shall I help thee? from the threshing-floor or from the wine-press?" It is difficult to explain the אַל, which Ewald (§ 355, *b*) supposes to stand for אִם לֹא. Thenius gives a simpler explanation, namely, that it is a subjective negation and the sentence hypothetical, so that the condition would be only expressed by the close connection of the two clauses (according to Ewald, § 357). "From the threshing-floor or from the wine-press?" *i.e.* I can neither help thee with corn nor with wine, cannot procure thee either food or drink. He then asked her what her trouble was; upon which she related to him the horrible account of the slaying of her own child to appease her hunger, etc.—Ver. 30. The king, shuddering at this horrible account, in which the curses of the law in Lev. xxvi. 29 and Deut. xxviii. 53, 57 had been literally fulfilled, rent his clothes; and the people then saw that he wore upon his body the hairy garment of penitence and mourning, מִבַּיִת, within, *i.e.* beneath the upper garment, as a sign of humiliation before God, though it was indeed more an *opus operatum* than a true bending of the heart before God and His judgment. This is proved by his conduct in ver. 31. When, for example, the complaint of the woman brought the heart-breaking distress of the city before him, he exclaimed, "God do so to me . . . if the head of Elisha remain upon him to-day." Elisha had probably advised that on no condition should the city be given up, and promised that God would deliver it, if they humbled themselves before Him in sincere humility and prayed for His assistance. The king thought that he had done his part by putting on the hairy garment; and as the anticipated help had nevertheless failed to come, he flew into a rage, for which the prophet was to pay the penalty. It is true that this rage only proceeded from a momentary ebullition of passion, and quickly gave place to a better movement of his conscience. The king hastened after the messenger whom he had sent to behead Elisha, for the purpose of preventing the execution of the murderous command which he had given in the hurry of his boiling wrath (ver. 32); but it proves, nevertheless, that the king was still wanting in that true repentance, which would have sprung from the recognition of the distress as a judgment inflicted by the Lord. The desperate deed, to which his violent wrath had impelled him, would have been accomplished, if the Lord had not protected His prophet and revealed to him the king's design, that he might adopt defensive measures.—Ver. 32. The elders of the city were assembled together in Elisha's house, probably to seek for counsel and consolation; and the king sent a man before him (namely, to behead the prophet); but before the messenger arrived, the prophet told the elders of the king's intention: "See ye that this son of a murderer (Joram, by descent and disposition a genuine son of Ahab, the murderer of Naboth and the prophets) is sending to cut off my head?" and commanded them to shut the door against the messenger and to force him back at the door, because he already heard the sound of his master's feet behind him. These measures of Elisha, therefore, were not dictated by any desire to resist the lawful authorities, but were acts of prudence by which he delayed the execution of an unrighteous and murderous command which had been issued in haste, and thereby rendered a service to the king himself.—In ver. 33 we have to supply from the context that the king followed close upon the messenger, who came down to Elisha while he was talking with the elders; and he (the king) would of course be admitted at once. For the subject to וַיֹּאמֶר. is not the messenger, but the king, as is evident from ch. vii. 2

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[1] Clericus gives as a substantial parallel the following passage from Plutarch (*Artax.* c. 24): "he only killed the beasts of burden, so that the *head of an ass* was hardly to be bought for sixty drachmæ;" and Grotius quotes the statement in Plin. *h. n.* viii. 57, that when *Casalinum* was besieged by Hannibal a mouse was sold for 200 *denaria.*

and 17. The king said: "Behold the calamity from the Lord, why shall I wait still further for the Lord?"—the words of a despairing man, in whose soul, however, there was a spark of faith still glimmering. The very utterance of his feelings to the prophet shows that he had still a weak glimmer of hope in the Lord, and wished to be strengthened and sustained by the prophet; and this strengthening he received.

Ch. vii. 1, 2. Elisha announced to him the word of the Lord: "At the (this) time to-morrow a seah of wheaten flour (סֹלֶת, see at 1 Kings v. 2) will be worth a shekel, and two seahs of barley a shekel in the gate, *i.e.* in the market; at Samaria." A seah, or a third of an ephah = a Dresden peck (*Metze*), for a shekel was still a high price; but in comparison with the prices given in ch. vi. 25 as those obtained for the most worthless kinds of food, it was incredibly cheap. The king's aide-de-camp (שָׁלִישׁ: see at 2 Sam. xxiii. 8; אֲשֶׁר לַמֶּלֶךְ נִשְׁעָן, an error in writing for אֲשֶׁר הַמֶּלֶךְ נשׁ׳, cf. ver. 17, and for the explanation ch. v. 18) therefore replied with mockery at this prophecy: "Behold (*i.e.* granted that) the Lord made windows in heaven, will this indeed be?" *i.e.* such cheapness take place. (For the construction, see Ewald, § 357, *b.*) The ridicule lay more especially in the "windows in heaven," in which there is an allusion to Gen. vii. 11, *sc.* to rain down a flood of flour and corn. Elisha answered seriously: "Behold, thou wilt see it with thine eyes, but not eat thereof" (see vers. 17 sqq.). The fulfilment of these words of Elisha was brought about by the event narrated in vers. 3 sqq.—Vers. 3–7. "Four men were before the gate as lepers," or at the gateway, separated from human society, according to the law in Lev. xiii. 46, Num. v. 3, probably in a building erected for the purpose (cf. ch. xv. 5), just as at the present day the lepers at Jerusalem have their huts by the side of the Zion gate (*vid.* Strauss, *Sinai u. Golgatha*, p. 205, and Tobler, *Denkblätter aus Jerus.* p. 411 sqq.). These men being on the point of starvation, resolved to invade the camp of the Syrians, and carried out this resolution בַּנֶּשֶׁף, in the evening twilight, not the morning twilight (Seb. Schm., Cler., etc.), on account of ver. 12, where the king is said to have received the news of the flight of the Syrians during the night. Coming to "the end of the Syrian camp," *i.e.* to the outskirts of it on the city side, they found no one there. For (vers. 6, 7) "the Lord had caused the army of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots and horses, a noise of a great army," so that, believing the king of Israel to have hired the kings of the Hittites and Egyptians to fall upon them, they fled from the camp in the twilight אֶל־נַפְשָׁם, with regard to their life, *i.e.* to save their life only, leaving behind them their tents, horses, and asses, and the camp as it was.—The miracle, by which God delivered Samaria from the famine or from surrendering to the foe, consisted in an oral delusion, namely, in the fact that the besiegers thought they heard the march of hostile armies from the north and south, and were seized with such panic terror that they fled in the greatest haste, leaving behind them their baggage, and their beasts of draught and burden. It is impossible to decide whether the noise which they heard had any objective reality, say a miraculous buzzing in the air, or whether it was merely a deception of the senses produced in their ears by God; and this is a matter of no importance, since in either case it was produced miraculously by God. The kings of the Hittites are kings of northern Canaan, upon Lebanon and towards Phœnicia; חִתִּים in the broader sense for Canaanites, as in 1 Kings x. 29. The plural, "kings of the Egyptians," is probably only occasioned by the parallel expression "kings of the Hittites," and is not to be pressed.—Vers. 8–11. When these lepers (*these*, pointing back to vers. 3 sqq.) came into the camp which the Syrians had left, they first of all satisfied their own hunger with the provisions which they found in the tents, and then took different valuables and concealed them. But their consciences were soon aroused, so that they said: We are not doing right; this day is a day of joyful tidings: if we are silent and wait till the morning light, guilt will overtake us; "for it is the duty of citizens to make known things relating to public safety" (Grotius). They then resolved to announce the joyful event in the king's palace, and reported it to the watchman at the city gate. שֹׁעֵר הָעִיר stands as a generic term in a collective sense for the persons who watched at the gate; hence the following plural לָהֶם, and in ver. 11 הַשֹּׁעֲרִים. "And the gate-keepers cried out (what they had heard) and reported it in the king's palace."—Vers. 12 sqq. The king imagined that the unexpected departure of the Syrians was only a *ruse*, namely, that they had left the camp and hidden themselves in the field, to entice the besieged out of the fortress, and then fall upon them and press into the city. בְּהַשָּׂדֶה according to later usage for בַּשָּׂדֶה (*vid.* Ewald, § 244, *a*). In order to make sure of the correctness or incorrectness of this conjecture, one of the king's servants (counsellors) gave this advice: "Let them take (the *Vav* before יִקְחוּ as in ch. iv. 41) five of the horses left in the city, that we may send and see how the matter stands." The words, "Behold they (the five horses) are as the whole multitude of Israel that are left in it (the city); behold they are as the whole multitude of Israel that are gone," have this meaning: The five horsemen (for horses stand for horsemen, as it is self-evident that it was men on horseback and not the horses themselves that were to be sent out as spies) can but share the fate of the rest of the people of Samaria, whether they return unhurt to meet death by starvation with the people that still remain, or fall into the hands of the enemy and are put to death, in which case they will only suffer the lot of those who have already perished. *Five* horses is an approximative small number, and is therefore not at variance with the following statement; that two pair of horses were sent out with chariots and men. The *Chethîb* הֶהָמוֹן is not to be altered, since there are other instances in which the first noun is written with the article, though in the construct state (*vid.* Ewald, § 290, *e*); and the *Keri* is only conformed to the following כְּכָל־הֲמוֹן.—Vers. 14*b* and 15. They then sent out two chariots with horses, who pursued the flying enemy to the Jordan, and found the whole of the road full of traces of the hurried flight, consisting of clothes and vessels that had been thrown away. The *Chethîb* בְּהֵחָפְזָם is the only correct reading, since it is only in the *Niphal* that חָפַז has the meaning to fly in great haste (cf. 1 Sam. xxiii. 26, Ps. xlviii. 6, civ. 7).—Vers. 16, 17. When the returning messengers reported this, the people went out and plundered the camp of the Syrians, and this was followed by the consequent cheapness of provisions predicted by Elisha. As the people streamed out, the unbelieving aide-de-camp, whom the king had ordered to take the oversight at the gate (הִפְקִיד, to deliver the oversight) for the purpose of preserving order in the crowding of the starving multitude, was trodden down by the people, so that he died, whereby this prediction of Elisha was fulfilled. The exact fulfilment of this prediction appeared so memorable to the historian, that he repeats this prophecy in vers. 18-20 along with the event which occasioned it, and refers again to its fulfilment.

CHAP. VIII. ELISHA HELPS THE SHUNAMMITE TO HER PROPERTY THROUGH THE HONOUR IN WHICH HE WAS HELD; AND PREDICTS TO HAZAEL HIS POSSESSION OF THE THRONE. REIGNS OF JORAM AND AHAZIAH, KINGS OF JUDAH.

Vers. 1–6. Elisha's Influence helps the Shunammite to the Possession of her House and Field.—Vers. 1 and 2. By the advice of Elisha, the woman whose son the prophet had restored to life (ch. iv. 33) had gone with her family into the land of the Philistines during a seven years' famine, and had remained there seven years. The two verses are rendered by most commentators in the pluperfect, and that with perfect correctness, for they are circumstantial clauses, and וַתָּקָם is merely a continuation of דִּבֶּר, the two together preparing the way for, and introducing the following event. The object is not to relate a prophecy of Elisha of the seven years' famine, but what afterwards occurred, namely, how king Joram was induced by the account of Elisha's miraculous works to have the property of the Shunammite restored to her upon her application. The seven years' famine occurred in the middle of Joram's reign, and the event related here took place before the curing of Naaman the Syrian (ch. v.), as is evident from the fact that Gehazi talked with the king (ver. 4), and therefore had not yet been punished with leprosy. But it cannot have originally stood between ch. iv. 37 and iv. 38, as Thenius supposes, because the incidents related in ch. iv. 38–44 belong to the time of this famine (cf. ch. iv. 38), and therefore precede the occurrence mentioned here. By the words, "the Lord called the famine, and it came seven years" (*sc.* lasting that time), the famine is described as a divine judgment for the idolatry of the nation.—Ver. 3. When the woman returned to her home at the end of the seven years, she went to the king to cry, *i.e.* to invoke his help, with regard to her house and her field, of which, as is evident from the context, another had taken possession during her absence.—Ver. 4. And just at that time the king was asking Gehazi to relate to him the great things that Elisha had done; and among these he was giving an account of the restoration of the Shunammite's son to life.—Vers. 5, 6. While he was relating this, the woman herself came in to invoke the help of the king to recover her property, and was pointed out to the king by Gehazi as the very woman of whom he was speaking, which caused the king to be so interested in her favour, that after hearing her complaint he sent a chamberlain with her (*saris* as in 1 Kings xxii. 9), with instructions to procure for her not only the whole of her property, but the produce of the land during her absence.—For עָזְבָה without *mappiq*, see Ewald, § 247, *d*.

Vers. 7–15. Elisha predicts to Hazael at Damascus the Possession of the Throne.—Vers. 7 sqq. Elisha then came to Damascus at the instigation of the Spirit of God, to carry out the commission which Elijah had received at Horeb with regard to Hazael (1 Kings xix. 15). Benhadad king of Syria was sick at that time, and when Elisha's arrival was announced to him, sent Hazael with a considerable present to the man of God, to inquire of Jehovah through him concerning his illness. The form of the name חֲזָהאֵל (here and ver. 15) is etymologically correct; but afterwards it is always written without ה. וְכָל־טוּב דמ׳ ("and that all kinds of good of Damascus") follows with a more precise description of the *minchah*—"a burden of forty camels." The present consisted of produce or wares of the rich commercial city of Damascus, and was no doubt very considerable; at the same time, it was not so large that forty camels were required to carry it. The affair must be judged according to the Oriental custom, of making a grand display with the sending of presents, and employing as many men or beasts of burden as possible to carry them, every one carrying only a single article (cf. Harmar, *Beobb.* ii. p. 29, iii. p. 43, and Rosenmüller, *A. u. N. Morgenl.* iii. p. 17).—Ver. 10. According to the *Chethîb* לֹא חָיֹה, Elisha's answer was, "Thou wilt not live, and (for) Jehovah has shown me that he will die;" according to the *Keri* לוֹ חָיֹה, "tell him: Thou wilt live, but Jehovah," etc. Most of the commentators follow the ancient versions, and the Masoretes, who reckon our לֹא among the fifteen passages of the O. T. in which it stands for the pronoun לוֹ (*vid.* Hilleri *Arcan. Keri*, p. 62 seq.), and some of the codices, and decide in favour of the *Keri*, (1) because the conjecture that לוֹ was altered into לֹא in order that Elisha might not be made to utter an untruth, is a very natural one; and (2) on account of the extreme rarity with which a negative stands before the inf. abs. with the finite verb following. But there is not much force in either argument.

The rarity of the position of לֹא before the inf. abs. followed by a finite verb, in connection with the omission of the pronoun לוֹ after אֱמֹר, might be the very reason why לֹא was taken as a pronoun; and the confirmation of this opinion might be found in the fact that Hazael brought back this answer to the king: "Thou wilt live" (ver. 14). The reading in the text לֹא (*non*) is favoured by the circumstance that it is the more difficult of the two, partly because of the unusual position of the negative, and partly because of the contradiction to ver. 14. But the לֹא is found in the same position in other passages (Gen. iii. 4, Ps. xlix. 8, and Amos ix. 8), where the emphasis lies upon the negation; and the contradiction to ver. 14 may be explained very simply, from the fact that Hazael did not tell his king the truth, because he wanted to put him to death and usurp the throne. We therefore prefer the reading in the text, since it is not in harmony with the character of the prophets to utter an untruth; and the explanation, "thou wilt not die of thine illness, but come to a violent death," puts into the words a meaning which they do not possess. For even if Benhadad did not die of his illness, he did not recover from it.—Ver. 11. Elisha then fixed Hazael for a long time with his eye, and wept. וַיַּעֲמֵד וגו׳, literally, he made his face stand fast, and directed it (upon Hazael) to shaming. עַד־בֹּשׁ as in Judg. iii. 25; not in a shameless manner (Thenius), but till Hazael was embarrassed by it.—Ver. 12. When Hazael asked him the cause of his weeping, Elisha replied: "I know the evil which thou wilt do to the sons of Israel: their fortresses wilt thou set on fire (שִׁלַּח בָּאֵשׁ, see at Judg. i. 8), their youths wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children to pieces, and cut asunder their women with child" (בִּקַּע, split, cut open the womb). This cruel conduct towards Israel which is here predicted of Hazael, was only a special elaboration of the brief statement made by the Lord to Elijah concerning Hazael (1 Kings xix. 17). The fulfilment of this prediction is indicated generally in ch. x. 32, 33, and xiii. 3 sqq.; and we may infer with certainty from Hos. x. 14 and xiv. 1, that Hazael really practised the cruelties mentioned.—Vers. 13 sqq. But when Hazael replied in feigned humility, What is thy servant, the dog (*i.e.* so base a fellow: for כֶּלֶב see at 1 Sam. xxiv. 15), that he should do such great things? Elisha said to him, "Jehovah has shown thee to me as king over Aram;" whereupon Hazael returned to his lord, brought him the pretended answer of Elisha that he would live (recover), and the next day suffocated him with a cloth dipped in water. מַכְבֵּר, from כָּבַר, to plait or twist, literally, anything twisted; not, however, a net for gnats or flies (Joseph., J. D. Mich., etc.), but a twisted thick cloth, which when dipped in water became so thick, that when it was spread over the face of the sick man it was sufficient to suffocate him.

Vers. 16–24. Reign of Joram of Judah (cf. 2 Chron. xxi. 2–20).—Joram became king in the fifth year of Joram of Israel, while Jehoshaphat his father was (still) king, the latter handing over the government to him two years before his death (see at ch. i. 17), and reigned eight years, namely, two years to the death of Jehoshaphat and six years afterwards.[1] The *Chethîb* שְׁמֹנֶה שָׁנָה is not to be altered, since the rule that the numbers two to ten take the noun in the plural is not without exception (cf. Ewald, § 287, *i*).—Vers. 18, 19. Joram had married a daughter of Ahab, namely Athaliah (ver. 26), and walked in the ways of the house of Ahab, transplanting the worship of Baal into his kingdom. Immediately after the death of Jehoshaphat he murdered his brothers, apparently with no other object than to obtain possession of the treasures which his father had left them (2 Chron. xxi. 2–4). This wickedness of Joram would have been followed by the destruction of Judah, had not the Lord preserved a shoot to the royal house for David's sake. For לָתֵת לוֹ נִיר see 1 Kings xi. 36. The following word לְבָנָיו serves as an explanation of לוֹ נִיר, "a light with regard to his sons," *i.e.* by the fact that he kept sons (descendants) upon the throne.—Vers. 20–22. Nevertheless the divine chastisement was not omitted. The ungodliness of Joram was punished partly by the revolt of the Edomites and of the city of Libnah from his rule, and partly by a horrible sickness of which he died (2 Chron. xxi. 12–15). Edom, which had hitherto had only a vicegerent with the title of king (see ch. iii. 9 and 1 Kings xxii. 48), threw off the authority of Judah, and appointed its own king, under whom it acquired independence, as the attempt of Joram to bring it back again under his control completely failed. The account of this attempt in ver. 21 and 2 Chron. xxi. 9 is very obscure. "Joram went over to *Zair*, and all his chariots of war with him; and it came to pass that he rose up by night and smote the Edomites round about, and indeed the captains of the war-chariots, and the people fled (*i.e.* the Judæan men of war, not the Edomites) to their tents." It is evident from this, that Joram had advanced to Zair in Idumæa; but there he appears to have been surrounded and shut in, so that in the night he fought his way through, and had reason to be glad that he had escaped utter destruction, since his army fled to their homes. צָעִירָה is an unknown place in Idumæa, which Movers, Hitzig, and Ewald take to be Zoar, but without considering that Zoar was in the land of Moab, not in Edom. The Chronicles have instead עִם שָׂרָיו, "with his captains," from a mere conjecture; whilst Thenius regards צעירה as altered by mistake from שֵׂעִירָה ("to Seir"), which is very improbable in the case of so well-known a name as שֵׂעִיר. הַסֹּבֵיב is a later mode of writing for הַסּוֹבֵב, probably occasioned by the frequently occurring word סָבִיב. "To this day," *i.e.* to the time when the original sources of our books were composed. For the Edomites were subjugated again by Amaziah and Uzziah (ch. xiv. 7 and 22), though under Ahaz they made incursions into Judah again (2 Chron. xxviii. 17).—At that time *Libnah* also revolted. This was a royal city of the early Canaanites, and at a later period it was still a considerable fortress (ch. xix. 8). It is probably to be sought for in the ruins of *Arak el Menshiyeh*, two hours to the west of *Beit-Jibrin* (see the Comm. on Josh. x. 29). This city probably revolted from Judah on the occurrence of an invasion of the land by the Philistines, when the sons of Joram were carried off, with the exception of the youngest, Jehoahaz (Ahaziah: 2 Chron. xxi. 16, 17).—Vers. 23, 24. According to 2 Chron. xxi. 18 sqq., Joram died of a terrible disease, in which his bowels fell out, and was buried in the city of David, though not in the family sepulchre of the kings.[1]

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[1] The words וִיהוֹשָׁפָט מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה have been improperly omitted by the Arabic and Syriac, and by Luther, Dathe, and De Wette from their translations; whilst Schulz, Maurer, Thenius, and others pronounce it a gloss. The genuineness of the words is attested by the LXX. (the Edit. Complut. being alone in omitting them) and by the Chaldee: and the rejection of them is just as arbitrary as the interpolation of מֵת, which is proposed by Kimchi and Ewald ("when Jehoshaphat was dead"). Compare J. Meyer, *annotatt. ad Seder Olam*, p. 916 sq.

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[1] "The building of Carthage, Dido, her husband Sichæus, her brother Pygmalion king of Tyre (*scelere ante alios immanior omnes*), all coincide with the reign of Joram. This synchronism of the history of Tyre is not without

Vers. 25–29. Reign of Ahaziah of Judah (cf. 2 Chron. xxii. 1–6).—Ahaziah, the youngest son of Joram, ascended the throne in the twenty-second year of his age. The statement in 2 Chron. xxii. 2, that he was forty-two years old when he became king, rests upon a copyist's error, namely, a confusion of כ twenty with מ forty. Now, since his father became king at the age of thirty-two, and reigned eight years, Ahaziah must have been born in the nineteenth year of his age. Consequently it may appear strange that Ahaziah had brothers still older than himself (2 Chron. xxi. 17); but as early marriages are common in the East, and the royal princes had generally concubines along with their wife of the first rank, as is expressly stated of Joram in 2 Chron. xxi. 17, he might have had some sons in his nineteenth year. His mother was called Athaliah, and was a daughter of the idolatrous Jezebel. In ver. 26 and 2 Chron. xxii. 2 she is called the daughter, *i.e.* grand-daughter, of Omri; for, according to ver. 18, she was a daughter of Ahab. Omri, the grandfather, is mentioned in ver. 26 as the founder of the dynasty which brought so much trouble upon Israel and Judah through its idolatry.—Ver. 27. Ahaziah, like his father, reigned in the spirit of Ahab, because he allowed his mother to act as his adviser (2 Chron. xxii. 3, 4).—Vers. 28, 29. Ahaziah went with Joram of Israel, his mother's brother, to the war with the Syrians at Ramoth. The contest for this city, which had already cost Ahab his life (1 Kings xxii.), was to furnish the occasion, according to the overruling providence of God, for the extermination of the whole of Omri's family. Being wounded in the battle with the Syrians, Joram king of Israel returned to Jezreel to be healed of his wounds. His nephew Ahaziah visited him there, and there he met with his death at the same time as Joram at the hands of Jehu, who had conspired against Joram (see ch. ix. 14 sqq. and 2 Chron. xxii. 7–9). Whether the war with Hazael at Ramoth was for the recapture of this city, which had been taken by the Syrians, or simply for holding it against the Syrians, it is impossible to determine. All

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significance here. The Tyrian, Israelitish, and Judæan histories are closely connected at this time. Jezebel, a Tyrian princess, was Ahab's wife, and again her daughter Athaliah was the wife of Joram, and after his death the murderess of the heirs of the kingdom, and sole occupant of the throne. Tyre, through these marriages, introduced its own spirit and great calamity into both the Israelitish kingdoms."—J. D. Michaelis on ver. 24.

that we can gather from ch. ix. 14 is, that at that time Ramoth was in the possession of the Israelites, whether it had come into their possession again after the disgraceful rout of the Syrians before Samaria (ch. vii.), or whether, perhaps, it was not recovered till this war. For אֲרַמִּים without the article see Ewald, § 277, *c.* —Ver. 29. בָּרָמָה = בְּרָמֹת גִּלְעָד, ver. 28; see at 1 Kings xxii. 4.

CHAP. IX. JEHU ANOINTED KING. HIS CONSPIRACY AGAINST JORAM. JORAM, AHAZIAH, AND JEZEBEL SLAIN.

Vers. 1–10. Anointing of Jehu by command of Elisha.—While the Israelitish army was at Ramoth, Elisha executed the last of the commissions which Elijah had received at Horeb (1 Kings xix. 16), by sending a pupil of the prophets into the camp to anoint *Jehu* the commander-in-chief of the army as king, and to announce to him, in the name of Jehovah, that he would be king over Israel; and to charge him to exterminate the house of Ahab.—Vers. 1–3 contain the instructions which Elisha gave to the pupil of the prophets. פַּךְ הַשֶּׁמֶן as in 1 Sam. x. 1. רְאֵה שָׁם יֵהוּא, look round there for Jehu. הֲקֵמֹתוֹ וגו׳, let him (bid him) rise up from the midst of his brethren, *i.e.* of his comrades in arms. חֶדֶר בְּחֶדֶר: the true meaning is, "into the innermost chamber" (see at 1 Kings xx. 30). Ver. 3 contains only the leading points of the commission to Jehu, the full particulars are communicated in the account of the fulfilment in vers. 6 sqq. "And flee, and thou shalt not wait." Elisha gave him this command, not to protect him from danger on the part of the secret adherents of Ahab (Theodoret, Cler.), but to prevent all further discussions, or "that he might not mix himself up with other affairs" (Seb. Schmidt).—Ver. 4. "And the young man, the servant of the prophet, went." The second נַעַר has the article in the construct state, contrary to the rule (*vid.* Ges. § 110, 2, *b*).—Vers. 5 sqq. After the communication of the fact that he had a word to Jehu, the latter rose up and went with him into the house, *i.e.* into the interior of the house, in the court of which the captains were sitting together. There the pupil of the prophets poured oil upon Jehu's head, and announced to him that Jehovah had anointed him king for Israel, and that he was to smite, *i.e.* exterminate, the house of Ahab, to avenge upon it the blood of the prophets (*vid.* 1 Kings xviii. 4, xix. 10).—Vers. 8–10 are simply a repetition of the threat in 1 Kings xxi. 21–23. For בְּחֵלֶק י׳, see at 1 Kings xxi. 23.

Vers. 11–15. Jehu's Conspiracy against Joram.—Ver. 11. When Jehu came out again to his comrades in arms, after the departure of the pupil of the prophets, they inquired הֲשָׁלוֹם, *i.e.* "is it all well? why did this madman come to thee?" not because they were afraid that he might have done him some injury (Ewald), or that he might have brought some evil tidings (Thenius), but simply because they conjectured that he had brought some important news. They called the prophet מְשֻׁגָּע, a madman, in derision, with reference to the ecstatic utterances of the prophets when in a state of holy inspiration. Jehu answered evasively, "Ye know the man and his muttering," *i.e.* ye know that he is mad and says nothing rational. שִׂיחַ includes both meditating and speaking.—Ver. 12. They were not contented with this answer, however, but said שֶׁקֶר, *i.e.* thou dost not speak truth. Jehu thereupon informed them that he had anointed him king over Israel in the name of Jehovah.—Ver. 13. After hearing this, they took quickly every man his garment, laid it under him upon the steps, blew the trumpet, and proclaimed him king. The clothes, which consisted simply of a large piece of cloth for wrapping round the body (see at 1 Kings xi. 29), they spread out in the place of carpets upon the steps, which served as a throne, to do homage to Jehu. For these signs of homage compare Matt. xxi. 7 and Wetstein, *N. Test. ad h. l.* The difficult words אֶל־גֶּרֶם הַמַּעֲלוֹת, as to the meaning of which the early translators have done nothing but guess, can hardly be rendered in any other way than that proposed by Kimchi (*lib. rad.*), *super ipsosmet gradus*, upon the steps themselves = upon the bare steps; גֶּרֶם being taken according to Chaldee usage like the Hebrew עֶצֶם in the sense of *substantia rei*, whereas the rendering given by Lud. de Dieu, after the Arabic جُرْم, *sectio—super aliquem e gradibus*, is without analogy in Hebrew usage (*vid.* L. de Dieu *ad h. l.*, and Ges. *Thes.* p. 303).[1] The meaning is, that without looking for a suitable place on which to erect a throne, they laid their clothes upon the bare steps, or the staircase of the house in which they were assembled, and set him thereon to proclaim him king.—Vers. 14, 15. Thus Jehu conspired against Joram, who (as is related again in the circumstantial clause which follows from וְיוֹרָם הָיָה to מֶלֶךְ אֲרָם; cf. ch. viii. 28, 29) had been keeping guard at Ramoth in Gilead, *i.e.* had defended this city against the attacks of Hazael, and had returned to Jezreel to be healed of the wounds which he had received; and said, "If it is your wish (נַפְשְׁכֶם), let no fugitive go from the city, to announce it in Jezreel (viz. what had taken place, the conspiracy or the proclamation of Jehu as king)." It is evident from this, that the Israelites were in possession of the city of Ramoth, and were defending it against the attacks of the Syrians, so that שֹׁמֵר in ver. 14 cannot be understood as relating to the siege of Ramoth. The *Chethîb* לַגִּיד for לְהַגִּיד is not to be altered according to the *Keri*, as there are many examples to be found of syncope in cases of this kind (*vid.* Olshausen, *Lehrb. d. Hebr. Spr.* p. 140).

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[1] The objection raised by Thenius, that it is only in combination with personal pronouns that the Chaldaic גְּרַם signifies *self* either in the Chaldee or Samaritan versions, is proved to be unfounded by לִגְרַם in Job i. 3 (Targ.). Still less can the actual circumstances be adduced as an objection, since

Vers. 16–29. SLAYING OF THE TWO KINGS, JORAM OF ISRAEL AND AHAZIAH OF JUDAH.—Ver. 16. Jehu drove without delay to Jezreel, where Joram was lying sick, and Ahaziah had come upon a visit to him.—Vers. 17–21. As the horsemen, who were sent to meet him on the announcement of the watchman upon the tower at Jezreel that a troop was approaching, joined the followers of Jehu, and eventually the watchman, looking down from the tower, thought that he could discover the driving of Jehu in the approaching troop, Joram and Ahaziah mounted their chariots to drive and meet him, and came upon him by the portion of ground of Naboth the Jezreelite. The second שִׁפְעַת in ver. 17 is a rarer form of the absolute state (see Ges. § 80, 2, Anm. 2, and Ewald, § 173, *d*).—מַה־לְּךָ וּלְשָׁלוֹם: "what hast thou to do with peace?" *i.e.* to trouble thyself about it. סֹב אֶל־אַחֲרָי: "turn behind me," *sc.* to follow me. הַמִּנְהָג כמ׳: "the driving is like the driving of Jehu; for he drives like a madman." בְּשִׁגָּעוֹן, *in insania, i.e.* in actual fact *in præcipitatione* (Vatabl.). "The

there is no evidence to support the assertion that there was no staircase in front of the house. The perfectly un-Hebraic conjecture אֶל־צֶלֶם הַמַּעֲלוֹת, "as a figure (or representation) of the necessary ascent" (Thenius), has not the smallest support in the Vulgate rendering, *ad similitudinem tribunalis.*

portion of Naboth" is the vineyard of Naboth mentioned in 1 Kings xxi., which formed only one portion of the gardens of the king's palace.—Ver. 22. To Joram's inquiry, "Is it peace, Jehu?" the latter replied, "What peace, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her many witchcrafts continue?" The notion of continuance is implied in עַד (see Ewald, § 217, *e*); זְנוּנִים is spiritual whoredom, *i.e.* idolatry. כְּשָׁפִים, *incantationes magicæ*, then witchcrafts generally, which were usually associated with idolatry (cf. Deut. xviii. 10 sqq.).—Ver. 23. Joram detecting the conspiracy from this reply, turned round (יַהֲפֹךְ יָדָיו as in 1 Kings xxii. 34) and fled, calling out to Ahaziah מִרְמָה, "deceit," *i.e.* we are deceived, in actual fact betrayed.—Ver. 24. But Jehu seized the bow (מִלֵּא יָדוֹ בַקֶּשֶׁת, lit. filled his hand with the bow), and shot Joram "between his arms," *i.e.* in his back between the shoulders in an oblique direction, so that the arrow came out at his heart, and Joram sank down in his chariot.—Ver. 25. Jehu then commanded his aide-de-camp (שָׁלִישׁ, see at 2 Sam. xxiii. 8) Bidkar to cast the slain man into the field of Naboth the Jezreelite, and said, "For remember how we, I and thou, both rode (or drove) behind his father Ahab, and Jehovah pronounced this threat upon him." אֲנִי וָאַתָּה are accusatives, written with a looser connection for אֹתִי וְאוֹתְךָ, as the apposition רֹכְבִים shows: literally, think of me and thee, the riders. The olden translators were misled by אֲנִי, and therefore transposed זְכֹר into the first person, and Thenius naturally follows them. רֹכְבִים צְמָדִים, riding in pairs. This is the rendering adopted by most of the commentators, although it might be taken, as it is by Kimchi and Bochart, as signifying the two persons who are carried in the same chariot. מַשָּׂא, a burden, then a prophetic utterance of a threatening nature (see the Comm. on Nah. i. 1). For the connection of the clauses וַיהוָה וגו׳, see Ewald, § 338, *a*. In ver. 26 Jehu quotes the word of God concerning Ahab in 1 Kings xxi. 19 so far as the substance is concerned, to show that he is merely the agent employed in executing it. "Truly (אִם־לֹא, a particle used in an oath) the blood of Naboth and the blood of his sons have I seen yesterday, saith the Lord, and upon this field will I requite him." The slaying of the sons of Naboth is not expressly mentioned in 1 Kings xxi. 13, "because it was so usual a thing, that the historian might leave it out as a matter of course" (J. D. Mich., Ewald). It necessarily followed, however, from the fact that Naboth's field was confiscated (see at 1 Kings xxi. 14).—Vers. 27, 28. When Ahaziah saw this, he fled by the way to the garden-house, but was smitten, *i.e.* mortally wounded, by Jehu at the height of Gur near Jibleam, so that as he was flying still farther to Megiddo he died, and was carried as a corpse by his servants to Jerusalem, and buried there. After הַכֻּהוּ, "and him also, smite him," we must supply וַיַּכֻּהוּ, "and they smote him," which has probably only dropped out through a copyist's error. The way by which Ahaziah fled, and the place where he was mortally wounded, cannot be exactly determined, as the situation of the localities named has not yet been ascertained. The "garden-house" (בֵּית הַגָּן) cannot have formed a portion of the royal gardens, but must have stood at some distance from the city of Jezreel, as Ahaziah went away by the road thither, and was not wounded till he reached the height of *Gur* near Jibleam. מַעֲלֵה־גוּר, the ascent or eminence of *Gur*, is defined by *Jibleam.* Now, as Ahaziah fled from Jezreel to Megiddo past Jibleam, Thenius thinks that Jibleam must have been situated between Jezreel and Megiddo. But between Jezreel and Megiddo there is only the plain of Jezreel or Esdrelom, in which we cannot suppose that there was any such eminence as that of *Gur.* Moreover *Jibleam* or *Bileam* (1 Chron. vi. 55, see at Josh. xvii. 11) was probably to the south of *Jenin,* where the old name בִּלְעָם has been preserved in the well of بلعمه, *Belameh,* near *Beled Sheik Manssûr,* which is half an hour's journey off. And it is quite possible to bring this situation of Jibleam into harmony with the account before us. For instance, it is *a priori* probable that Ahaziah would take the road to Samaria when he fled from Jezreel, not only because his father's brothers were there (ch. x. 13), but also because it was the most direct road to Jerusalem; and he might easily be pursued by Jehu and his company to the height of Gur near Jibleam before they overtook him, since the distance from Jezreel (Zerîn) to Jenin is only two hours and a half (Rob. *Pal.* iii. p. 828), and the height of Gur might very well be an eminence which he would pass on the road to Jibleam. But the wounded king may afterwards have altered the direction of his flight for the purpose of escaping to Megiddo, probably because he thought that he should be in greater safety there than he would be in Samaria.[1]

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[1] In 2 Chron. xxii. 8, 9, the account of the slaying of Ahaziah and his brethren (ch. x. 12 sqq.) is condensed into one brief statement, and then

—In ver. 29 we are told once more in which year of Joram's reign Ahaziah became king. The discrepancy between "the *eleventh* year" here and "the twelfth year" in ch. viii. 25 may be most simply explained, on the supposition that there was a difference in the way of reckoning the commencement of the years of Joram's reign.

Vers. 30–37. DEATH OF JEZEBEL.—Ver. 30. When Jehu came to Jezreel and Jezebel heard of it, "she put her eyes into lead polish (*i.e.* painted them with it), and beautified her head and placed herself at the window." פּוּךְ is a very favourite eye-paint with Oriental women even to the present day. It is prepared from antimony ore (كحل, *Cohol* or *Stibium* of the Arabs), which when pounded yields a black powder with a metallic brilliancy, which was laid upon the eyebrows and eyelashes either in a dry state as a black powder, or moistened generally with oil and made into an ointment, which is applied with a fine smooth eye-pencil of the thickness of an ordinary goose-quill, made either of wood, metal, or ivory. The way to use it was to hold the central portion of the pencil horizontally between the eyelids, and then draw it out between them, twisting it round all the while, so that the edges of the eyelids were blackened all round; and the object was to heighten the splendour of the dark southern eye, and give it, so to speak, a more deeply glowing fire, and to impart a youthful appearance to the whole of the eyelashes even in extreme old age. Rosellini found jars with eye-paint of this kind in the early Egyptian graves (*vid.* Hille, *über den Gebrauch u. die*

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afterwards it is stated with regard to Ahaziah, that "Jehu sought him, and they seized him when he was hiding in Samaria, and brought him to Jehu and slew him," from which it appears that Ahaziah escaped to Samaria. From the brevity of these accounts it is impossible to reconcile the discrepancy with perfect certainty. On the one hand, our account, which is only limited to the main fact, does not preclude the possibility that Ahaziah really escaped to Samaria, and was there overtaken by Jehu's followers, and then brought back to Jehu, and wounded upon the height of Gur near Jibleam, whence he fled to Megiddo, where he breathed out his life. On the other hand, in the perfectly summary account in the Chronicles, וְהוּא מִתְחַבֵּא בְשֹׁמְרוֹן may be understood as referring to the attempt to escape to Samaria and hide himself there, and may be reconciled with the assumption that he was seized upon the way to Samaria, and when overtaken by Jehu was mortally wounded.

Zusammensetzung der oriental. Augenschminke: Deutsch. morg. Ztsch. v. p. 236 sqq.).—Jezebel did this that she might present an imposing appearance to Jehu and die as a queen; not to allure him by her charms (Ewald, after Ephr. Syr.). For (ver. 31) when Jehu entered the palace gate, she cried out to him, "Is it peace, thou Zimri, murderer of his lord?" She addressed Jehu as Zimri the murderer of the king, to point to the fate which Jehu would bring upon himself by the murder of the king, as Zimri had already done (*vid.* 1 Kings xvi. 10-18).—Vers. 32, 33. But Jehu did not deign to answer the worthless woman; he simply looked up to the window and inquired: "Who is (holds) with me? who?" Then two, three chamberlains looked out (of the side windows), and by Jehu's command threw the proud queen out of the window, so that some of her blood spirted upon the wall and the horses (of Jehu), and Jehu trampled her down, driving over her with his horses and chariot.—Ver. 34. Jehu thereupon entered the palace, ate and drank, and then said to his men: "Look for this cursed woman and bury her, for she is a king's daughter." הָאֲרוּרָה, the woman smitten by the curse of God.—Vers. 35, 36. But when they went to bury her, they found nothing but her skull, the two feet, and the two hollow hands. The rest had been eaten by the dogs and dragged away. When this was reported to Jehu, he said: "This is the word of the Lord, which He spake by His servant Elijah," etc. (1 Kings xxi. 23), *i.e.* this has been done in fulfilment of the word of the Lord. Ver. 37 is also to be regarded as a continuation of the prophecy of Elijah quoted by Jehu (and not as a closing remark of the historian, as Luther supposes), although what Jehu says here does not occur verbatim in 1 Kings xxi. 23, but Jehu has simply expanded rather freely the meaning of that prophecy. וְהָיָת (*Chethîb*) is the older form of the 3d pers. fem. *Kal*, which is only retained here and there (*vid.* Ewald, § 194, *a*). אֲשֶׁר is a conjunction (see Ewald, § 337, *a*): "that men may not be able to say, This is Jezebel," *i.e.* that they may no more be able to recognise Jezebel.

CHAP. X. 1–27. EXTERMINATION OF THE OTHER SONS OF AHAB, OF THE BRETHREN OF AHAZIAH OF JUDAH, AND OF THE PROPHETS OF BAAL.

Vers. 1–11. EXTERMINATION OF THE SEVENTY SONS OF AHAB IN SAMARIA.—Vers. 1–3. As Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria (בָּנִים in the wider sense, viz. sons, including grandsons [see at ver. 13], as is evident from the fact that אֹמְנִים, foster-fathers, are mentioned, whereas Ahab had been dead fourteen years, and therefore his youngest sons could not have had foster-fathers any longer), Jehu sent a letter to the elders of the city and to the foster-fathers of the princes, to the effect that they were to place one of the sons of their lord upon the throne. There is something very strange in the words אֶל־שָׂרֵי יִזְרְעֶאל הַזְּקֵנִים, "to the princes of Jezreel, the old men," partly on account of the name *Jezreel*, and partly on account of the combination of הַזְּקֵנִים with שָׂרֵי. If we compare ver. 5, it is evident that הַזְּקֵנִים cannot be the adjective to שָׂרֵי י׳, but denotes the elders of the city, so that the preposition אֶל has dropped out before הזקנים. שָׂרֵי יִזְרְעֶאל, the princes or principal men of Jezreel, might certainly be the chief court-officials of the royal house of Ahab, since Ahab frequently resided in Jezreel. But against this supposition there is not only the circumstance that we cannot discover any reason why the court-officials living in *Samaria* should be called princes of Jezreel, but also ver. 5, where, instead of the princes of Jezreel, the governor of the city and the governor of the castle are mentioned. Consequently there is an error of the text in יזרעאל, which ought to read הָעִיר אֶל, though it is older than the ancient versions, since the Chaldee has the reading יזרעאל, and no doubt the Alexandrian translator read the same, as the Septuagint has sometimes *τῆς πόλεως*, like the Vulgate, and sometimes *Σαμαρείας*, both unquestionably from mere conjecture. The "princes of the city" are, according to ver 5, the prefect of the palace and the captain of the city; the זְקֵנִים, "elders," the magistrates of Samaria; and אֹמְנִים אַחְאָב, the foster-fathers and tutors appointed by Ahab for his sons and grandsons. אַחְאָב is governed freely by הָאֹמְנִים. In ver. 2 the words from וְאִתְּכֶם to הַנָּשֶׁק form an explanatory circumstantial clause: "since the sons of your lord are with you, and with you the war-chariots and horses, and a fortified city and arms," *i.e.* since you have everything in your hands,—the royal princes and also the power to make one of them king. It is perfectly evident from the words, "the sons of your lord," *i.e.* of king Joram, that the seventy sons of Ahab included grandsons also. This challenge of Jehu was only a *ruse*, by which he hoped to discover the feelings of the leading men of the capital of the kingdom, because he could not venture, without being well assured of them, to proceed to Samaria to exterminate the remaining members of the royal family of Ahab who were living there. נִלְחַם עַל, to fight concerning, *i.e.* for a person, as in Judg. ix. 17.—Vers. 4, 5. This *ruse* had the desired result. The recipients of the letter were in great fear, and said, Two kings could not stand before him, how shall we? and sent messengers to announce their submission, and to say that they were willing to carry out his commands, and had no desire to appoint a king.—Vers. 6, 7. Jehu then wrote them a second letter, to say that if they would hearken to his voice, they were to send to him on the morrow at this time, to Jezreel, the heads of the sons of their lord; which they willingly did, slaying the seventy men, and sending him their heads in baskets. רָאשֵׁי אַנְשֵׁי בְנֵי אד׳, "the heads of the men of the sons of your lord," *i.e.* of the male descendants of Ahab, in which אַנְשֵׁי may be explained from the fact that בְּנֵי־אֲדֹנֵיכֶם has the meaning "royal princes" (see the similar case in Judg. xix. 22). In order to bring out still more clearly the magnitude of Jehu's demand, the number of the victims required is repeated in the circumstantial clause, "and there were seventy men of the king's sons with (אֵת) the great men of the city, who had brought them up."—Vers. 8, 9. When the heads were brought, Jehu had them piled up in two heaps before the city-gate, and spoke the next morning to the assembled people in front of them: "Ye are righteous. Behold I have conspired against my lord, and have slain him, but who has slain all these?" Jehu did not tell the people that the king's sons had been slain by his command, but spake as if this had been done without his interfering by a higher decree, that he might thereby justify his conspiracy in the eyes of the people, and make them believe what he says still further in ver. 10: "See then that of the word of the Lord nothing falls to the ground (*i.e.* remains unfulfilled) which Jehovah has spoken concerning the house of Ahab; and Jehovah has done what He spake through His servant Elijah."—Ver. 11. The effect of these words was, that the people looked quietly on when he proceeded to slay all the rest of the house of Ahab, *i.e.* all the more distant relatives in Jezreel, and "all his great men," *i.e.* the superior officers of the fallen dynasty, and "all his acquaintances," *i.e.* friends and adherents, and "all his priests," probably court priests, such as the heathen kings had; not secular counsellors or nearest servants (Thenius), a meaning which כֹּהֲנִים never has, not even in 2 Sam. viii. 18 and 1 Kings iv. 5.

Vers. 12–17. Extermination of the Brothers of Ahaziah of Judah and of the other Members of Ahab's Dynasty.—Vers. 12 sqq. Jehu then set out to Samaria; and on the way, at the binding-house of the shepherds, he met with the brethren of Ahaziah, who were about to visit their royal relations, and when he learned who they were, had them all seized, viz. forty-two men, and put to death at the cistern of the binding-house. וַיָּבֹא וַיֵּלֶךְ, "he came and went," appears pleonastic; the words are not to be transposed, however, as Böttcher and Thenius propose after the Syriac, but וַיֵּלֶךְ is added, because Jehu did not go at once to Samaria, but did what follows on the way. By transposing the words, the slaying of the relations of Ahaziah would be transferred to Samaria, in contradiction to vers. 15 sqq.—The words from הוּא בֵּית וגו׳ onwards, and from וְיֵהוּא to מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה, are two circumstantial clauses, in which the subject יֵהוּא is added in the second clause for the sake of greater clearness: "when he was at the binding-house of the shepherds on the road, and Jehu (there) met with the brethren of Ahaziah, he said . . . ." בֵּית־עֵקֶד הָרֹעִים (*Βαιθακάθ*, LXX.) is explained by Rashi, after the Chaldee בֵּית כְּנִישַׁת רָעַיָּא, as signifying *locus conventus pastorum*, the meeting-place of the shepherds; and Gesenius adopts the same view. But the rest of the earlier translators for the most part adopt the rendering, *locus ligationis pastorum*, from עָקַד, to bind, and think of a house *ubi pastores ligabant oves quando eas tondebant.* In any case it was a house, or perhaps more correctly a place, where the shepherds were in the habit of meeting, and that on the road from Jezreel to Samaria; according to Eusebius in the *Onom.* *s.v.* *Βαιθακάθ*, a place fifteen Roman miles from *Legio* (*Lejun, Megiddo*), in the great plain of Jezreel: a statement which may be correct with the exception of the small number of miles, but which does not apply to the present village of *Beit Kad* to the east of Jenin (Rob. *Pal.* iii. p. 157), with which, according to Thenius, it exactly coincides. אֲחֵי אֲחַזְיָהוּ, for which we have בְּנֵי אֲחֵי אח׳, Ahaziah's brothers' sons, in 2 Chron. xxii. 8, were not the actual brothers of Ahaziah, since they had been carried off by the Arabians and put to death before he ascended the throne (2 Chron. xxi. 17), but partly step-brothers, *i.e.* sons of Joram by his concubines, and partly Ahaziah's nephews and cousins. לִשְׁלוֹם, *ad salutandum, i.e.* to inquire how they were, or to visit the sons of the king (Joram) and of the queen-mother, *i.e.* Jezebel, therefore Joram's brothers. In ver. 1 they are both included among the "sons" of Ahab.—Vers. 15 sqq. As Jehu proceeded on his way, he met with *Jehonadab* the son of Rechab, and having saluted him, inquired, "Is thy heart true as my heart towards thy heart?" and on his replying יֵשׁ, "it is (honourable or true)," he bade him come up into the chariot, saying וְיֵשׁ, "if it is (so), give me thy hand;" whereupon he said still further, "Come with me and see my zeal for Jehovah," and then drove with him to Samaria, and there exterminated all that remained of Ahab's family. *Jehonadab* the son of *Rechab* was the tribe-father of the Rechabites (Jer. xxxv. 6). The rule which the latter laid down for his sons and descendants for all time, was to lead a simple nomad life, namely, to dwell in tents, follow no agricultural pursuits, and abstain from wine; which rule they observed so sacredly, that the prophet Jeremiah held them up as models before his own contemporaries, who broke the law of God in the most shameless manner, and was able to announce to the Rechabites that they would be exempted from the Chaldæan judgment for their faithful observance of their father's precept (Jer. xxxv.). *Rechab*, from whom the descendants of Jehonadab derived their tribe-name, was the son of Hammath, and belonged to the tribe of the Kenites (1 Chron. ii. 55), to which Hobab the father-in-law of Moses also belonged (Num. x. 29); so that the Rechabites were probably descendants of Hobab, since the Kenites the sons of Hobab had gone with the Israelites from the Arabian desert to Canaan, and had there carried on their nomad life (Judg. i. 16, iv. 11; 1 Sam. xv. 6; see Witsii *Miscell. ss.* ii. p. 223 sqq.). This Jehonadab was therefore a man distinguished for the strictness of his life, and Jehu appears to have received him in this friendly manner on account of the great distinction in which he was held, not only in his own tribe, but also in Israel generally, that he might exalt himself in the eyes of the people through his friendship.[1]—In הֲיֵשׁ אֶת־לְבָבְךָ, "is with regard to thy heart honourable or upright?" אֵת is used to subordinate the noun to the clause, in the sense of *quoad* (see Ewald, § 277, *a*). כָּל־הַנִּשְׁאָרִים לְאַחְאָב, "all that remained to Ahab," *i.e.* all the remaining members of Ahab's house.

Vers. 18–27. Extermination of the Prophets and Priests of Baal and of the Baal-worship.—Vers. 18 sqq. Under the pretence of wishing to serve Baal even more than Ahab had done, Jehu appointed a great sacrificial festival for this idol, and had all the worshippers of Baal throughout all the land summoned to attend it; he then placed eighty of his guards around the temple of Baal in which they were assembled, and after the sacrifice was offered, had the priests and worshippers of Baal cut down by them with the sword. Objectively considered, the slaying of the worshippers of Baal was in accordance with the law, and, according to the theocratical principle, was perfectly right; but the subjective motives which impelled Jehu, apart from the artifice, were thoroughly selfish, as Seb. Schmidt has correctly observed. For since the priests and prophets of Baal throughout the Israelitish kingdom were bound up with the dynasty of Ahab, with all their interests and with their whole existence, they might be very dangerous to Jehu, if on any political grounds he should happen not to promote their objects, whereas by their extermination he might hope to draw to his side the whole of the very numerous supporters of the Jehovah-worship, which had formerly been legally established in Israel, and thereby establish his throne more firmly. The very fact that Jehu allowed the calf-worship to continue, is a proof that he simply used religion as the means of securing his own ends (ver. 29). קַדְּשׁוּ עֲצָרָה (ver. 20), "sanctify a festal assembly," *i.e.* proclaim in the land a festal assembly for Baal (compare Isa. i. 13; and for עֲצָרָה = עֲצֶרֶת, see at Lev. xxiii. 36). וַיִּקְרָאוּ, and they proclaimed, *sc.* the festal meeting.—Ver. 21. The temple of Baal was filled פֶּה לָפֶה,

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[1] According to C. a Lapide, Jehu took him up into his chariot "that he might establish his authority with the Samaritans, and secure a name for integrity by having Jehonadab as his ally, a man whom all held to be both an upright and holy man, that in this way he might the more easily carry out the slaughter of the Baalites, which he was planning, without any one daring to resist him."

"from one edge (end) to the other." פֶּה in this sense is not to be derived from פֵּאָה, a corner (Cler., Ges.), but signifies mouth, or the upper rim of a vessel. *Metaphora sumta a vasibus humore aliquo plenis:* Vatabl.—Ver. 22. אֲשֶׁר עַל־הַמֶּלְתָּחָה is the keeper of the wardrobe (Arab. *præfectus vestium*), for the ἀπ. λεγ. מֶלְתָּחָה signifies *vestiarium* (Ges. *Thes.* p. 764). The reference is not to the wardrobe of the king's palace, out of which Jehu had every one who took part in the feast supplied with a festal dress or new caftan (Deres., Then., etc.), but the wardrobe of the temple of Baal, since the priests of Baal had their own sacred dresses like the priests of almost all religions (as Silius has expressly shown in his *Ital.* iii. 24–27, of the priests of the Gadetanic Hercules). These dresses were only worn at the time of worship, and were kept in a wardrobe in the temple.—Vers. 23, 24. Jehu then came with Jehonadab to the temple, and commanded the worshippers of Baal to be carefully examined, that there might not be one of the worshippers of Jehovah with (among) them. When the priests of Baal were preparing to offer sacrifice, Jehu had eighty men of his guards stationed before the temple, and laid this injunction upon them: "Whoever lets one of the men escape whom I bring into your hands (we must read יִמַּלֵּט instead of יִמָּלֵט), his life shall answer for his (the escaped man's) life. נַפְשׁוֹ תַּחַת נַפְשׁוֹ, as in 1 Kings xx. 39.—Ver. 25. כְּכַלֹּתוֹ: when he (the sacrificing priest, not Jehu) had finished the burnt-offering (the singular suffix וֹ may also be taken as indefinite, when one had finished, *vid.* Ewald, § 294, *b*), Jehu commanded the runners and aides-de-camp: Come and smite them (the worshippers of Baal), without one coming out (escaping); whereupon they smote them with the edge of the sword, *i.e.* slew them unsparingly. וַיַּשְׁלִכוּ: and the runners and aides-de-camp threw (those who had been slain) away, and went into the citadel of the temple of Baal. עִיר בֵּית־הַבַּעַל cannot be the city of the temple of Baal, *i.e.* that part of the city in which the temple of Baal stood, for the runners were already in the court of the temple of Baal; but it is no doubt the temple-citadel, the true temple-house (עִיר from עוּר, *locus circumseptus*)—*templum Baalis magnifice exstructum instar arcis alicujus* (Seb. Schm.).—Ver. 26. They then fetched the columns (מַצֵּבֹת) out of the temple and burned them (the suffix in יִשְׂרְפוּהָ refers to the plural מַצֵּבֹת taken as an abstract noun, as in ch. iii. 3; cf. Ewald, § 317, *a*). They then broke in pieces the מַצְּבַת הַבַּעַל, column of Baal, *i.e.* the real image of Baal, probably a conical stone dedicated to Baal, whereas the מַצֵּבֹת, which were burned, were wooden columns as *πάρεδροι* or *σύμβωμοι* of Baal (see Movers, *Phöniz.* i. p. 674).—Ver. 27. Lastly, they destroyed the temple itself and made it לְמַחֲרָאוֹת, privies, for which the Masoretes have substituted the euphemistic מוֹצָאוֹת, sinks, as a mark of the greatest insult, many examples of which are to be met with among Oriental tribes (*vid.* Ezra vi. 11, Dan. ii. 5, and Hævernick *in loc.*).—Thus Jehu exterminated Baal from Israel. This remark in ver. 28 forms the introduction to the history of Jehu's reign, with which the last epoch in the history of the ten tribes begins.

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3. From the Commencement of the Reigns of Jehu in Israel, and Athaliah in Judah, to the Destruction of the Kingdom of Israel.

Chap. x. 28-xvii.

In the 161 years which this epoch embraces, from B.C. 883 to 722, the fate of the kingdom of Israel was accomplished. The first hundred years, which comprised the reigns of Jehu and his descendants, Jehoahaz, Jehoash, and Jeroboam II., were the last day of grace for the rebellious ten tribes, at the expiration of which the judgment began to burst upon them. As the anointing of Jehu by Elisha was performed by the command of God, so also was the religious reform, which Jehu vigorously commenced with the extermination of the Baal-worship, a fruit of the labours of the prophets Elijah and Elisha within the sinful kingdom; but this reform stood still half-way, since Jehu merely restored the idolatrous Jehovah-worship introduced by Jeroboam, and neither he himself nor his successors desisted from that sin. In order, therefore, if possible, to complete the work begun by His prophets of converting Israel to its God, the Lord now began to visit the rebellious tribes with severe chastisements, giving them up into the power of the Syrians, who under Hazael not only conquered the whole of the land to the east of the Jordan, but almost annihilated the military force of the Israelites (ch. x. 32, 33, xiii. 3, 7). This chastisement did not remain without fruit. Jehoahaz prayed to the Lord, and the Lord had compassion upon the oppressed for the sake of His covenant with the patriarchs, and sent them deliverers in Joash, who recovered the conquered land from the Syrians after the death of Hazael, and in Jeroboam, who even restored the ancient boundaries of the kingdom (ch. xiii. 4, 5, and 23 sqq., xiv. 25, 26). But with this renewal of external strength, luxuriance and debauchery, partiality in judgment and oppression of the poor began to prevail, as we may see from the prophecies of Hosea and Amos (Amos v. 10 sqq., vi. 1–6; Hos. vi. 7 sqq.); and in addition to the Jehovah-worship, which was performed in an idolatrous manner (Hos. viii. 13, ix. 4, 5), the worship of Baal was carried on most vigorously (Hos. ii. 13, 15, x. 1, 2), so that the people made pilgrimages to Bethel, Gilgal, and even to Beersheba in the south of the kingdom of Judah (Hos. iv. 15; Amos iv. 4, v. 5, viii. 14), and on account of the worship thus zealously performed, relied in carnal security upon the protection of God, and scoffed at the judgments of the Lord which were threatened by the prophets (Amos v. 14, 18). This internal corruption increased with the death of Jeroboam, till all civil order was dissolved. Anarchy, conflicts for the possession of the throne, and repeated regicides, broke up the kingdom and made it ripe for the judgment of destruction, which was gradually accomplished by the Assyrians, whom one party in the reign of Menahem had called to their help, under Pul, Tiglath-pileser, and Shalmanasar.—The kingdom of Judah, on the other hand, was purified from the destructive consequences of the alliance with the dynasty of Ahab through the overthrow by the high priest Jehoiada of the godless Athaliah, who had murdered the royal children after the death of Ahaziah and seized upon the government, and, with the renewal of the covenant and the extermination of the worship of Baal under the young king whom Jehoiada had trained, was brought back to the theocratic path; and notwithstanding the fact that in the closing years of Joash and Amaziah idolatry found admission again, was preserved in that path, in which it increased in strength and stability, so that not only were the wounds quickly healed which the war with Israel, occasioned by Amaziah's pride, had inflicted upon it through the conquest and plunder of Jerusalem (ch. xiv. 8 sqq.), but during the sixty-eight years comprised in the reigns of Uzziah and Jotham, the people rose to a state of great prosperity and wealth through the pursuit of agriculture and trade, and a thoughtful development of the resources of the land, and the kingdom acquired great external power through the humiliation of the Philistines and the subjugation of the Edomites once more (2 Chron. xxvi.). At the same time, neither of these kings was able entirely to suppress the illegal worship of the high places, although the temple-worship was regularly sustained according to the law; and with the increase of wealth and power, not only did luxuriance and pride set in, but also idolatry and an inclination to heathen ways (Isa. ii. 5–8 and 16 sqq., v. 18 sqq.); so that even in the reigns of Uzziah and Jotham Isaiah predicted the day of the Lord's judgment, which was to fall upon everything lofty and proud (Isa. ii.–iv.). This prophecy began to be fulfilled, so far as its first beginnings were concerned, even in the time of Ahaz. Under this weak and idolatrous ruler idolatry gained the upper hand, and the worship of Jehovah was suppressed; and this open apostasy from the Lord was followed by immediate punishment. The allied kings of Israel and Syria forced their way victoriously into Judah, and even stood before the gates of Jerusalem, with the intention of destroying the kingdom of Judah, when Ahaz, despising the help of the Lord, which was offered him by the prophet Isaiah, purchased the assistance of Tiglath-pileser the king of Assyria with silver and gold, and was thereby delivered from his foes. But this made him dependent upon the Assyrians, who would have conquered the kingdom of Judah and destroyed it, as they had already destroyed the kingdom of Israel, had not the Lord hearkened to the prayer of the pious king and miraculously routed the powerful army of Sennacherib before the walls of Jerusalem.

CHAP. X. 28–36. REIGN OF JEHU OF ISRAEL.

Vers. 28, 29. Jehu exterminated the worship of Baal from Israel; but the sins of Jeroboam, the golden calves at Bethel and Dan, that is to say, the idolatrous worship of Jehovah, he allowed to remain. "The golden calves, etc.:" this is a supplementary and explanatory apposition to "the sins of Jeroboam." —Vers. 30, 31. Jehu is promised the possession of the throne to the fourth generation of his sons for having exterminated the godless royal house of Ahab (*vid.* ch. xv. 12). The divine sentence, "because thou hast acted well to do right in mine eyes, (because thou) hast done as it was in my heart to the house of Ahab," refers to the deed as such, and not to the subjective motives by which Jehu had been actuated. For it is obvious that it had not sprung from pure zeal for the honour of the Lord, from the limitation added in ver. 31: "but Jehu did not take heed to walk in the law of Jehovah with all his heart, and did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam."—Vers. 32, 33. Therefore (this link of connection follows from the actual fact, though it is not distinctly mentioned in the text) Hazael had now to inflict chastisement upon faithless Israel. In Jehu's days Jehovah began "to cut off in Israel," *i.e.* to rend away certain portions from the kingdom. "Hazael smote them (the Israelites) on the whole of the border of Israel," *i.e.* of the kingdom, "from Jordan to the sun-rising (*i.e.* on the eastern side of the Jordan), the whole of the land of Gilead (אֵת כָּל־אֶרֶץ is dependent upon יַכֵּה, which must be supplied from יַכֵּם), namely, the territory of the tribes of Gad, Reuben, and Half-Manasseh, from Aroer on the brook Arnon (now *Araayr*, a ruin on the northern border of the Mojeb (Arnon) valley; see at Num. xxxii. 34), the southern border of the Israelitish land to the east of the Jordan (Deut. ii. 36, iii. 12), both Gilead and Bashan," the two countries into which Gilead in the broader sense was divided (see at Deut. iii. 8–17).—These conquests took place during the twenty-eight years' reign of Jehu, since Hazael began to reign before Jehu, viz. while Joram was king, and had already fought successfully against the Israelites at Ramoth in Joram's reign (ch. viii. 28, 29), but not in the later part of Jehu's reign, as Thenius supposes.—Vers. 34–36. Conclusion of the history of Jehu's reign. The length of his reign is not given till the end in this instance (ver. 36), contrary to the usual custom in our books, because his ascent of the throne is not expressly mentioned in what precedes; but the general character of his reign is given in immediate connection with the account of his anointing and of the extermination of Ahab's dynasty.

CHAP. XI. TYRANNY AND OVERTHROW OF ATHALIAH, AND CORONATION OF JOASH.

Vers. 1–3. THE GOVERNMENT OF ATHALIAH (cf. 2 Chron. xxii. 10–12). After the death of Ahaziah of Judah, his mother Athaliah, a daughter of Ahab and Jezebel (see at ch. viii. 18 and 26), seized upon the government, by putting to death all the king's descendants with the exception of Joash, a son of Ahaziah of only a year old, who had been secretly carried off from the midst of the royal children, who were put to death, by Jehosheba, his father's sister, the wife of the high priest Jehoiada, and was first of all hidden with his nurse in the bed-chamber, and afterwards kept concealed from Athaliah for six years in the high priest's house. The ו before רָאֲתָה is no doubt original, the subject, Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah, being placed at the head absolutely, and a circumstantial clause introduced with וְרָאֲתָה: "Athaliah, when she saw that, etc., rose up." כָּל־זֶרַע הַמַּמְלָכָה, all the royal seed, *i.e.* all the sons and relations of Ahaziah, who could put in any claim to succeed to the throne. At the same time there were hardly any other direct descendants of the royal family in existence beside the sons of Ahaziah, since the elder brothers of Ahaziah had been carried away by the Arabs and put to death, and the rest of the closer blood-relations of the male sex had been slain by Jehu (see at ch. x. 13).—*Jehosheba* (יְהוֹשֶׁבַע, in the Chronicles יְהוֹשַׁבְעַת), the wife of the high priest Jehoiada (2 Chron. xxii. 11), was a daughter of king Joram and a sister of Ahaziah, but she was most likely not a daughter of Athaliah, as this worshipper of Baal would hardly have allowed her own daughter to marry the high priest, but had been born to Joram by a wife of the second rank. מְמוֹתִים (*Chethib*), generally a substantive, *mortes* (Jer. xvi. 4; Ezek. xxviii. 8), here an adjective: slain or set apart for death. The *Keri* מוּמָתִים is the participle *Hophal*, as in 2 Chron. xxii. 11. בַּחֲדַר הַמ׳ is to be taken in connection with תִּגְנֹב: she stole him (took him away secretly) from the rest of the king's sons, who were about to be put to death, into the chamber of the beds, *i.e.* not the children's bed-room, but a room in the palace where the beds (mattresses and counterpanes) were kept, for which in the East there is a special room that is not used as a dwelling-room (see Chardin in Harm. *Beobb.* iii. p. 357). This was the place in which at first it was easiest to conceal the child and its nurse. וַיַּסְתִּרוּ, "they (Jehosheba and the nurse) concealed him," is not to be altered into וַתַּסְתִּירֵהוּ after the Chronicles, as Thenius maintains. The masculine is used in the place of the feminine, as is frequently the case. Afterwards he was concealed with her (with Jehosheba) in the house of Jehovah, *i.e.* in the home of the high-priest in one of the buildings of the court of the temple.

Vers. 4–20. Dethronement of Athaliah and Coronation

OF JOASH (compare the account in 2 Chron. xxiii., which is more elaborate in several points).[1]—Ver. 4. In the seventh year of Athaliah's reign, Jehoiada sent for the captains of the king's body-guard to come to him into the temple, and concluded a covenant with them, making them swear and showing them the king's son, namely, to dethroné the tyrant Athaliah and set the king's son upon the throne. שָׂרֵי הַמֵּאיוֹת, *centuriones*, military commanders of the executioners and runners, *i.e.* of the royal body-guard. The *Chethîb* מֵאיוֹת may be explained from the fact that מֵאָה is abridged from מְאָיָה (*vid.* Ewald, § 267, *d*). On הַכְּרֵתִי וְהַפְּלֵתִי = כָּרִי וְרָצִים (1 Kings i. 38) see the Comm. on 2 Sam. viii. 18; and on לְ as a periphrasis of the genitive, see Ewald, § 292, *a*. In 2 Chron xxiii. 1–3 the chronicler not only gives the names of these captains, but relates still more minutely that they went about in the land and summoned the Levites and heads of families in Israel to Jerusalem, probably under the pretext of a festal celebration; whereupon Jehoiada concluded a covenant with the persons assembled, to ensure their assistance in the execution of his plan.—Vers. 5–8. Jehoiada then communicated to those initiated into the plan the necessary instructions for carrying it out, assigning them the places which they were to occupy. "The third part of you that come on the Sabbath (*i.e.* mount guard) shall keep the guard of the king's house (וְשֹׁמְרֵי is a corruption of וְשָׁמְרוּ), and the third part shall be at the gate Sur, and the third part at the gate behind the runners, and (ye) shall keep guard over the house for defence; and the two parts of you, (namely) all who depart on the Sabbath, shall keep the guard of the house of Jehovah for the king; and ye shall surround the king round about, every one with his weapons in his hand; and whoever presses into the ranks shall be slain, and shall be with the king when he goes out and in," *i.e.* in all his steps. The words בָּאֵי הַשַּׁבָּת and יֹצְאֵי הַשַּׁבָּת, "those coming and those going out on the Sabbath," denote the divisions of the watch, those who performed duty on the Sabbath and those who were relieved on the Sabbath; not the military guard at the palace however, but the temple-guard, which consisted of Levites. For David had divided the priests and Levites into classes, every one of which had to perform service for a week and was relieved on the Sabbath: compare 1 Chron. xxiii.-xxvi. with Josephus (*Ant.* vii. 14, 7), who expressly says that every one of the twenty-four classes of priests had to attend to the worship of God "for eight days, from Sabbath to Sabbath;" also with Luke i. 5. On the other hand, we do not know that there was any similar division and obligation to serve in connection with the royal body-guard or with the army. The current opinion, that by those who come on the Sabbath and those who go out on the Sabbath we are to understand the king's halberdiers or the guard of the palace, is therefore proved to be unfounded and untenable. And if there could be any doubt on the matter, it would be removed by vers. 7 and 10. According to ver. 7, two parts of those who went away (were relieved) on the Sabbath were to undertake the guarding of the house of Jehovah about the king, *i.e.* to keep guard over that room in the temple where the king then was. Could Jehoiada have used the royal body-guard, that was being relieved from guarding the palace, for such a purpose as this? Who can imagine that this is a credible thing? According to ver. 10, Jehoiada gave to the captains over a hundred the weapons of king David, which were in the house of Jehovah. Did the palace-guard then return without weapons? In 2 Chron. xxiii. 4, "those coming on the Sabbath" are correctly described as the priests and Levites coming on the Sabbath, *i.e.* the priests and Levites who entered upon their week's duty at the temple on the Sabbath. According to this explanation of the words, which is the only one that can be grammatically sustained, the facts were as follows: "When Jehoiada had initiated the captains of the royal halberdiers, and with their help the heads of families of the people generally, into his plan of raising the youthful Joash to the throne and dethroning Athaliah, he determined to carry out the affair chiefly with the help of the priests and Levites who entered upon their duty in the temple on the Sabbath, and of those who left or were relieved at the same time, and entrusted the command over these men to the captains of the royal halberdiers, that they might occupy the approaches to the temple with the priests and Levites under their command, so as to prevent the approach of any military from the king's palace and protect the youthful king. These captains had come to the temple without weapons, to avoid attracting attention. Jehoiada therefore gave them the weapons of king David that were kept in the temple.

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[1] In both accounts we have only short extracts preserved from a common and more complete original, the extracts having been made quite independently of one another and upon different plans. Hence the apparent discrepancies, which have arisen partly from the incompleteness of the two abridged accounts, and partly from the different points of view from which the extracts were made, but which contain no irreconcilable contradictions. The assertion of De Wette, which has been repeated by Thenius and Bertheau, that the chronicler distorted the true state of the case to favour the Levites, rests upon a misinterpretation of our account, based upon arbitrary assumptions, as I have already shown in my *apologetischer Versuch über die Chronik* (p. 361 sqq.).

With regard to the distribution of the different posts, the fact that two-thirds are spoken of first of all in vers. 5, 6, and then two parts in ver. 7, occasions no difficulty. For the two-thirds mentioned in vers. 5, 6 were those who came on the Sabbath, whereas the "two divisions" (שְׁתֵּי הַיָּדוֹת) referred to in ver. 7 were all who went away on the Sabbath. Consequently the priests and Levites, who came on the Sabbath and entered upon the week's service, were divided into three sections; and those who should have been relieved, but were detained, into two. Probably the number of those who came this time to perform service at the temple was much larger than usual, as the priests were initiated into Jehoiada's secret; so that it was possible to make three divisions of those who arrived, whereas those who were about to depart could only be formed into two. The three divisions of those who were entering upon duty are also distinctly mentioned in the Chronicles; whereas, instead of the two divisions of those who were relieved, "all the people" are spoken of. The description of the different posts which were assigned to these several companies causes some difficulty. In general, so much is clearly indicated in vers. 7 and 8, that the two divisions of those who were relieved on the Sabbath were to keep guard over the young king in the house of Jehovah, and therefore to remain in the inner spaces of the temple-court for his protection; whereas the three divisions of those who were entering upon duty were charged with the occupation of the external approaches to the temple. One-third was to "keep watch over the king's house," *i.e.* to observe whatever had to be observed in relation to the king's palace; not to occupy the king's palace, or to keep guard in the citadel at the palace gate (Thenius), but to keep watch towards the royal palace, *i.e.* to post themselves so that no one could force a way into the temple, with which the indefinite בְּבֵית הַמֶּלֶךְ׃ in the

Chronicles harmonizes, if we only translate it "against (at) the king's house." The idea that the palace was guarded is precluded not only by ver. 13, according to which Athaliah came out of the palace to the people to the house of Jehovah, which she would not have been able to do if the palace had been guarded, but also by the circumstance that, according to ver. 19, the chief men were in the temple with the whole of the (assembled) people, and did not go out of the house of Jehovah into the king's house till after the anointing of Joash and the death of Athaliah. The other third was to station itself at the gate *Sur* (סוּר), or, according to the Chronicles, *Yesod* (יְסוֹד), foundation-gate. There is no doubt as to the identity of the gate *Sur* and the gate *Yesod;* only we cannot decide whether one of these names has simply sprung from a copyist's error, or whether the gate had two different names. The name שַׁעַר יְסוֹד, foundation-gate, suggests a gate in the outer court of the temple, at the hollow of either the Tyropœon or the Kedron; for the context precludes our thinking of a palace gate. The third division was to be posted, "at the gate behind the runners;" or, as it is stated in ver. 19, "at the gate of the runners." It is very evident from ver. 19 that this gate led from the temple-court to the royal palace upon Zion, and was therefore on the western side of the court of the temple. This also follows from ver. 4 of the Chronicles, according to which this division was to act as "doorkeepers of the thresholds" (לְשֹׁעֲרֵי הַסִּפִּים), *i.e.* to keep guard at the gate of the thresholds. For we may safely infer, from a comparison with 1 Chron. ix. 19, that הַסִּפִּים were the thresholds of the ascent to the temple. The last clause, "and shall keep guard over the house for defence," refers to all three divisions, and serves to define with greater precision the object for which they were stationed there. מַסָּח is not a proper name (LXX., Luther, and others), but an appellative in the sense of defence or resistance, from נָסַח, *depellere.* The meaning is, that they were to guard the house, to keep off the people, and not to let any of the party of Athaliah force a way into the temple.—In ver 7, כֹּל יֹצְאֵי הַשׁ׳ is an explanatory apposition to וּשְׁתֵּי הַיָּדוֹת בָּכֶם, "and the two parts in (of) you," namely, all who go out on the Sabbath, *i.e.* are relieved from duty. Their task, to observe the watch of the house of Jehovah with regard to the king, is more precisely defined in ver. 8 as signifying, that they were to surround the king with weapons in their hands, and slay every one who attempted to force a way into their ranks. בְּצֵאתוֹ וּבְבֹאוֹ, *i.e.* in all his undertakings, or in all his steps; צֵאת וָבוֹא being applied to the actions and pursuits of a man, as in Deut. xxviii. 6, xxxi. 2, etc. (see the Comm. on Num. xxvii. 17). Thenius has explained this incorrectly: "in his going out of the temple and entering into the palace."—Vers. 9–11. The execution of these plans. The high priest gave the captains "the spears and shields (שְׁלָטִים: see at 2 Sam. viii. 7) which (belonged) to king David, that were in the house of Jehovah," *i.e.* the weapons which David had presented to the sanctuary as dedicatory offerings. Instead of הַחֲנִית we ought probably to read הַחֲנִיתוֹת (cf. Mic. iv. 3, Isa. ii. 4), after the הַחֲנִיתִים of the Chronicles, since the collective force of חֲנִית is very improbable in prose, and a ח might easily drop out through a copyist's error. Jehoiada gave the captains weapons from the temple, because, as has been already observed, they had come unarmed, and not, as Thenius imagines, to provide them with old and sacred weapons instead of their ordinary ones. In ver. 11 the position of all the divisions is given in a comprehensive manner, for the purpose of appending the further course of the affair, namely, the coronation of the king. "Thus the halberdiers stood, every one with his weapons in his hand, from the right wing of the house to the left wing, towards the altar (of burnt-offering) and the (temple-) house, round about the king," *i.e.* to cover the king on all sides. For it is evident that we are not to understand עַל־הַמֶּלֶךְ סָבִיב as signifying the encircling of the king, from the statement in ver. 12, according to which Jehoiada did not bring out the king's son till after the men had taken up their positions. The use of הָרָצִים, to signify the captains with the armed priests and Levites put under their command for this purpose, is an uncommon one, but it may be explained from the fact that רָצִים had retained the general meaning of royal halberdiers; and the priests and Levites under the command of the captains of the royal body-guard by this very act discharged the duty of the royal body-guard itself. The chronicler has used the indefinite expression כָּל־הָעָם, the whole of the people assembled in the temple-court.—Ver. 12. After the approaches to the temple had all been occupied in this manner, Jehoiada brought out the king's son from his home in the temple; or, he brought him forth, set the crown upon him, and handed him the testimony, *i.e.* the book of the law, as the rule of his life and action as king, according to the precept in Deut. xvii. 18, 19. וְאֶת־הָעֵדוּת is connected with יִתֵּן עָלָיו אֶת־הַנֵּזֶר, because יִתֵּן עָלָיו has the general meaning "delivered to him, handed him," and does not specially affirm the putting on of the crown. יַמְלִיכוּ, they made him king. The subject is the persons present, though, as a matter of course, the anointing was performed by Jehoiada and the priests, as the Chonicles expressly affirm. Clapping the hands was a sign of joyful acclamation, like the cry, "Long live the king" (cf. 1 Kings i. 39).

Vers. 13-16. *Death of Athaliah.*—Vers. 13, 14. As soon as Athaliah heard the loud rejoicing of the people, she came to the people into the temple, and when she saw the youthful king in his standing-place surrounded by the princes, the trumpeters, and the whole of the people, rejoicing and blowing the trumpets, she rent her clothes with horror, and cried out, Conspiracy, conspiracy! הָרָצִין הָעָם does not mean the people running together, but the original reading in the text was probably הָרָצִין וְהָעָם, the people and the halberdiers, and the *Vav* dropped out through an oversight of the copyist. By הָרָצִין we are to understand the captains of the halberdiers with the armed Levites, as in ver. 11; and הָעָם is the people who had assembled besides (cf. ver. 19). In the Chronicles הָרָצִים וְהַמְהַלְלִים הַמֶּלֶךְ is in apposition to הָעָם: the noise, of the people, the halberdiers, and those who praised the king. The עַמּוּד, upon which the king stood, was not a pillar, but an elevated standing-place (*suggestus*) for the king at the eastern gate of the inner court (בַּמָּבוֹא, 2 Chron. xxiii. 13 compared with Ezek. xlvi. 2), when he visited the temple on festive occasions (cf. ch. xxiii. 3), and it was most probably identical with the brazen scaffold (כִּיּוֹר) mentioned in 2 Chron. vi. 13, which would serve to explain כַּמִּשְׁפָּט, "according to the right" (Angl. V.. "as the manner was"). הַשָּׂרִים are not merely the captains mentioned in vers. 4, 9, and 10, but these together with the rest of the assembled heads of the nation (רָאשֵׁי הָאָבוֹת, 2 Chron. xiii. 2). הַחֲצֹצְרוֹת, the trumpets, is an abbreviated expression for those blowing the trumpets, the trumpeters. The reference is to the Levitical musicians mentioned in 1 Chron. xiii. 8, xv. 24, etc.; for they are distinguished from כָּל־הָעָם וגו', "all the people of the land rejoicing and blowing the trumpets," *i.e.* not all the military men of the land who were present in Jerusalem (Thenius), but the mass of the people present in the temple (Bertheau).—Ver. 15. Jehoiada then commanded the captains

פְּקֻדֵי הַחַיִל, those placed over the army, *i.e.* the armed men of the Levites, to lead out Athaliah between the ranks, and to slay every one who followed her, *i.e.* who took her part (הָמֵת, inf. abs. instead of imperative); for, as is added supplementarily in explanation of this command, the priest had (previously) said: "Let her not be slain in the house of Jehovah." The temple was not to be defiled with the blood of the usurper and murderess.—Ver. 16. Thus they made way for her on both sides, or, according to the correct explanation given by the Chaldee, יָשִׂימוּ לָהּ יָדַיִם, they formed lines (*Spalier*, fences) and escorted her back, and she came by the way of the horses' entrance into the palace, and was there put to death. מְבוֹא הַסּוּסִים is explained in the Chronicles by מְבוֹא שַׁעַר הַסּוּסִים, entrance of the horse-gate. The entrance for the horses, *i.e.* the way which led to the royal mews, is not to be identified with the horse-gate mentioned in Neh. iii. 28; for this was a gate in the city wall, whereas the road from the temple to the royal mews, which were no doubt near the palace, was inside the wall.

Vers. 17–20. *Renewal of the covenant, extermination of the worship of Baal, and entrance of the king into the palace.*—Ver. 17. After Jehoash was crowned and Athaliah put to death, Jehoiada concluded the covenant (1) between Jehovah on the one hand and the king and people on the other, and (2) between the king and the people. The former was simply a renewal of the covenant which the Lord had made with Israel through Moses (Ex. xxiv.), whereby the king and the people bound themselves לִהְיוֹת לְעָם לַיהוָה, *i.e.* to live as the people of the Lord, or to keep His law (cf. Deut. iv. 20, xxvii. 9, 10), and was based upon the "testimony" handed to the king. This covenant naturally led to the covenant between the king and the people, whereby the king bound himself to rule his people according to the law of the Lord, and the people vowed that they would be obedient and subject to the king as the ruler appointed by the Lord (cf. 2 Sam. v. 3). The renewal of the covenant with the Lord was necessary, because under the former kings the people had fallen away from the Lord and served Baal. The immediate consequence of the renewal of the covenant, therefore, was the extermination of the worship of Baal, which is mentioned at once in ver. 18, although its proper place in order of time is after ver. 18. All the people (כָּל־עַם הָאָרֶץ, as in ver. 14) went to the temple of Baal, threw down his altars, broke his images (the columns of

Baal and Astarte) rightly, *i.e.* completely (הֵיטֵב as in Deut. ix. 21), and slew the priest Mattan, probably the chief priest of Baal, before his altars. That the temple of Baal stood within the limits of the sanctuary, *i.e.* of the temple of Jehovah (Thenius), cannot be shown to be probable either from 2 Chron. xxiv. 7 or from the last clause of this verse. (For 2 Chron. xxiv. 7 see the fuller remarks on ch. xii. 5.) The words "and the priest set overseers over the house of Jehovah" do not affirm that Jehoiada created the office of overseer over the temple for the purpose of guarding against a fresh desecration of the temple by idolatry (Thenius), but simply that he appointed overseers over the temple, namely, priests and Levites entrusted with the duty of watching over the performance of worship according to the precepts of the law, as is more minutely described in vers. 18 and 19.—Ver. 19. And he took the captains, and they brought the king down out of the house of Jehovah, etc. The word יִקַּח is not to be pressed, but simply affirms that Jehoiada entrusted the persons named with the duty of conducting the king into his palace. Beside the captains over a hundred (see at ver. 4) there are mentioned הַכָּרִי וְהָרָצִים, *i.e.* the royal halberdiers (the body-guard), who had passed over to the new king immediately after the fall of Athaliah and now followed their captains, and כָּל־עַם הָאָרֶץ, all the rest of the people assembled. Instead of the halberdiers there are mentioned in the Chronicles הָאַדִּירִים הַמּוֹשְׁלִים בָּעָם, the nobles and lords in the nation,—a completion implied in the facts themselves, since Jehoiada had drawn the heads of the nation into his plan, and on the other hand the express allusion to the body-guard might be omitted as of inferior importance. We cannot infer from יֹרִידוּ that the bridge between Moriah and Zion was not yet in existence, as Thenius supposes, but simply that the bridge was lower than the temple-courts. Instead of שַׁעַר הָרָצִים, the gate of the runners (*i.e.* of the halberdiers), we find in the Chronicles שַׁעַר הָעֶלְיוֹן, the upper gate, which appears to have been a gate of the temple, according to ch. xv. 35 and 2 Chron. xxvii. 3. The statement that they came by the way of the runners' gate into the house of the king is not at variance with this, for it may be understood as meaning that it was by the halberdiers' gate of the temple that the entry into the palace was carried out.—In ver. 20 this account is concluded with the general remark that all the people rejoiced, *sc.* at the coronation of Joash, and the city was quiet, when they slew Athaliah with the sword. This is the way, so far as the sense is concerned, in which the last two clauses are to be connected.

CHAP. XII. REIGN OF KING JOASH OF JUDAH, AND REPAIRING OF THE TEMPLE.

All that is recorded of the forty years' reign of Joash, in addition to the general characteristics of the reign (vers. 1-4), is the repairing of the temple which was effected by him (vers. 5-17), and the purchased retreat of the Syrians from their invasion of Judah (vers. 18 and 19), and finally his violent death in consequence of a conspiracy formed against him, of which we have only a brief notice in vers. 20-22. The parallel account in 2 Chron. xxiv. supplies several additions to this: viz. concerning the wives of Joash, the distribution of the Levites at the repairing of the temple, the death of Jehoiada, and the seduction of Joash to idolatry by the chief men of Judah, and the stoning of the prophet Zechariah, who condemned this rebellion,—all of which can easily be fitted into our account.

Vers. 1-4 (1-5). *Reign of Joash.*—Ver. 1 (1, 2). His age on ascending the throne, viz. seven years (cf. ch. xi. 4).—Commencement and length of his reign. His mother's name was *Zibiah* of Beersheba.—Ver. 2 (3). Joash did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord כָּל־יָמָ֑יו אֲשֶׁר וגו׳, "all his days that," etc., *i.e.* during the whole period of his life that Jehoiada instructed him (for אֲשֶׁר after substantives indicating time, place, and mode, see Ewald, § 331, *c*, 3; and for the use of the suffix attached to the noun defined by אֲשֶׁר וגו׳, compare ch. xiii. 14); not "all his life long, because Jehoiada had instructed him," although the *Athnach* under יָמָ֑יו favours this view. For Jehoiada had not instructed him before he began to reign, but he instructed him after he had been raised to the throne at the age of seven years, that is to say, so long as Jehoiada himself lived. The כָּל־יְמֵי יְהוֹיָדָע of the Chronicles is therefore a correct explanation. But after Jehoiada's death, Joash yielded to the petitions of the princes of Judah that he would assent to their worshipping idols, and at length went so far as to stone the son of his benefactor, the prophet Zechariah, on account of his candid reproof of this apostasy (2 Chron. xxiv. 17-22).—Ver. 3 (4). But the worship on the high places was not entirely suppressed, notwithstanding the fact that Jehoiada instructed him (on this standing formula see the Comm. on 1 Kings xv. 14).

Vers. 4–16 (5–17). *Repairing of the temple* (cf. 2 Chron. xxiv. 5–14).—Vers. 4, 5. That the temple, which had fallen into ruins, might be restored, Joash ordered the priests to collect all the money of the consecrated gifts, that was generally brought into the house of the Lord, and to effect therewith all the repairs that were needed in the temple. The general expression כֶּסֶף הַקֳּדָשִׁים, money of the holy gifts, *i.e.* money derived from holy gifts, is more specifically defined by כֶּסֶף עוֹבֵר וגו', according to which it consisted of three kinds of payments to the temple: viz. (1) כֶּסֶף עוֹבֵר, *i.e.* money of persons mustered (or numbered in the census); עוֹבֵר is an abbreviated expression for הָעֹבֵר הַפְּקֻדִים, "he who passes over to those who are numbered" (Ex. xxx. 13), as it has been correctly interpreted by the Chald., Rashi, Abarb., and others; whereas the explanation "money that passes" (Luther), or current coin, which Thenius still defends, yields no suitable sense, since it is impossible to see why only current coin should be accepted, and not silver in bars or vessels, inasmuch as Moses had accepted gold, silver, copper, and other objects of value *in natura*, for the building of the tabernacle (Ex. xxv. 2, 3, xxxv. 5, xxxvi. 5, 6). The brevity of the expression may be explained from the fact, that כֶּסֶף עוֹבֵר had become a technical term on the ground of the passage in the law already cited. The objection raised by Thenius, that the explanation adopted would be without any parallel, would, if it could be sustained, also apply to his own explanation "current money," in which עוֹבֵר is also taken as an abbreviation of עֹבֵר לַסֹּחֵר in Gen. xxiii. 16. There is still less ground for the other objection, that if כֶּסֶף עוֹבֵר denoted one kind of temple-revenue, כֹּל or אִישׁ would necessarily have been used. (2) אִישׁ . . . עֶרְכּוֹ, "every kind of souls' valuation money;" אִישׁ is more precisely defined by עֶרְכּוֹ, and the position in which it stands before כֶּסֶף resembles the בִּתְרוֹ in Gen. xv. 10—literally, soul money of each one's valuation. Thenius is wrong in his interpretation, "every kind of money of the souls according to their valuation," to which he appends the erroneous remark, that אִישׁ is also used in Zech. x. 1 and Joel ii. 7 in connection with inanimate objects as equivalent to כֹּל. אִישׁ . . . עֶרְכּוֹ, every kind of valuation, because both in the redemption of the male first-born (Num. xviii. 15, 16) and also in the case of persons under a vow a payment had to be made according to the valuation of the priest. (3) "All the money that cometh into any one's mind to bring into the house of the Lord," *i.e.* all the money which was offered as a free-will offering to the sanctuary. This money the priests were to take to themselves, every one from his acquaintance, and therewith repair all the dilapidations that were to be found in the temple. In the Chronicles the different kinds of money to be collected for this purpose are not specified; but the whole is embraced under the general expression "the taxes of Moses the servant of God, and of the congregation of Israel, to the tent of the testimony," which included not only the contribution of half a shekel for the building of the temple, which is prescribed in Ex. xxx. 12 sqq., but also the other two taxes mentioned in this account.[1] Again, according to ver. 7 of the Chronicles, Joash gave the following reason for his command: "For Athaliah, the wicked woman, and her sons have demolished the house of God, and all the dedicated gifts of the house of Jehovah have they used for the Baals." We are not told in what the violent treatment or demolition (פֶּרֶץ) of the temple by Athaliah and her sons consisted. The circumstance that considerable repairs even of the stonework of the temple were required in the time of Joash, about 130 or 140 years after it was built, is quite conceivable without any intentional demolition. And in no case can we infer from these words, as Thenius has done, that Athaliah or her sons had erected a temple of Baal within the limits of the sanctuary. The application of all the dedicatory offerings of the house of Jehovah to the Baals, involves nothing more than that the gifts which were absolutely necessary for the preservation of the temple and temple-service were withdrawn from the sanctuary of Jehovah and applied to the worship of Baal, and therefore that the decay of the sanctuary would necessarily follow upon the neglect of the worship.—Vers. 6 sqq. But when the twenty-third year of the reign of Joash arrived, and the dilapidations had not been repaired, the king laid the matter before the high priest Jehoiada and the priests, and directed them not to take the money any more from their acquaintance, but to give it for the dilapidations of the temple; "and the priests consented to take no money, and not to repair the dilapidations of the house," *i.e.* not to take charge of the repairs. We may see from this consent how the command of the king is to be understood. Hitherto the priests had collected the money to pay for the repairing of the temple; but inasmuch as they had not executed the repairs, the king took away from them both the collection of the money and the obligation to repair the temple. The reason for the failure of the first measure is not mentioned in our text, and can only be inferred from the new arrangement made by the king (ver. 9): "Jehoiada took a chest,—of course by the command of the king, as is expressly mentioned in 2 Chron. xxiv. 8,—bored a hole in the door (the lid) thereof, and placed it by the side of the altar (of burnt-offering) on the right by the entrance of every one into the house of Jehovah, that the priests keeping the threshold might put thither (*i.e.* into the chest) all the money that was brought into the house of Jehovah."—Ver. 10. "And when they saw that there was much money in the chest, the king's writer and the high priest came, and bound up and reckoned the money that was found in the house of Jehovah." צוּר, to bind up the money in bags (cf. ch. v. 23). The binding is mentioned before the reckoning, because the pieces of money were not counted singly, but packed at once into bags, which were then weighed for the purpose of estimating the amount received.—Vers. 11, 12. "They gave the money weighed into the hands of those who did the work, who were placed over the house of Jehovah," *i.e.* the appointed overlookers of the work; "and they paid it (as it was required) to the carpenters and builders, who worked at the house, and to the masons and the hewers of stone, and for the purchase of wood and hewn stones, to repair the dilapidations of the house, and for all that might be spent (יֵצֵא, *i.e.* be given out) for the house for repairing it." It is quite clear from this, that the assertion of J. D. Michaelis, De Wette, and others, that the priests had embezzled the money collected, is perfectly imaginary. For if the king had cherished any such suspicion against the priests, he would not have asked for their consent to an alteration of the first arrangement or to the new measure; and still less would he have commanded that the priests who kept the door should put the money into the chest, for this would have been no safeguard against embezzlement. For if the door-keepers wished to embezzle, all that they would need to do would be to put only a part of the money into the chest. The simple reason and occasion for giving up the first arrangement and introducing the new arrangement with the chest, was that the first measure had proved to be insufficient for the accomplishment of the purpose expected by the king. For inasmuch as the king had not assigned any definite amount for the repairing of the temple, but had left it to the priests to pay for the cost of the repairs out of the money that was to be collected, one portion of which at least came to themselves, according to the law, for their own maintenance and to provide for the expenses of worship, it might easily happen, without the least embezzlement on the part of the priests, that the money collected was paid out again for the immediate necessities of worship and their own maintenance, and that nothing remained to pay for the building expenses. For this reason the king himself now undertook the execution of the requisite repairs. The reason why the chest was provided for the money to be collected was, first of all, that the money to be collected for the building might be separated from the rest of the money that came in and was intended for the priests; and, secondly, that the contributions to be gathered for the building might be increased, since it might be expected that the people would give more if the collections were made for the express purpose of restoring the temple, than if only the legal and free-will offerings were simply given to the priests, without any one knowing how much would be applied to the building.—And because the king had taken the building into his own hand, as often as the chest was full he sent his secretary to reckon the money along with the high priest, and hand it over to the superintendents of the building.

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[1] There is no ground either in the words or in the facts for restricting the perfectly general expression "taxes of Moses and of the congregation of Israel" to the payment mentioned in Ex. xxx. 12, as Thenius and Bertheau have done, except perhaps the wish to find a discrepancy between the two accounts, for the purpose of being able to accuse the chronicler, if not of intentional falsification, as De Wette does, at any rate of perverting the true state of the case. The assertion of Thenius, that the yearly payment of half a shekel, which was appointed in the law and regarded as atonement-money, appears to be directly excluded in our text, is simply founded upon the interpretation given to כֶּסֶף עוֹבֵר as current money, which we have already proved to be false.

If we compare with this the account in the Chronicles, it helps to confirm the view which we have obtained from an unprejudiced examination of the text as to the affair in question. According to ver. 5 of the Chronicles, Joash had commanded the priests and Levites to accelerate the repairs; "but the Levites did not hurry." This may be understood as signifying that they were dilatory both in the collection of the money and in the devotion of a portion of their revenues to the repairing of the temple. But that the king took the matter in hand himself, not so much because of the dilatoriness or negligence of the priests as because his first measure, regarded as an expedient, did not answer the purpose, is evident from the fact that, according to the Chronicles, he did not content himself with placing the chest at the entrance, but had a proclamation made at the same time in Judah and Jerusalem, to offer the tax of Moses for the repair of the temple (ver. 9)—evidently with no other intention than to procure more liberal contributions. For, according to ver. 10, all the chief men and all the people rejoiced thereat, and cast their gifts into the chest, *i.e.* they offered their gifts with joy for the purpose that had been proclaimed.—The other points of difference between the Chronicles and our text are unimportant. For instance, that they placed the chest "at the gate of the house of Jehovah on the outside." The חוּצָה merely defines the expression in our text, בְּיָמִין בְּבוֹא־אִישׁ בֵּית 'יי, "to the right at the entrance into the temple," more minutely, by showing that the ark was not placed on the inner side of the entrance into the court of the priests, but against the outer wall of it. This is not at variance with אֵצֶל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ in ver. 10; for even apart from the account in the Chronicles, and according to our own text, this cannot be understood as signifying that the ark had been placed in the middle of the court, as Thenius explains in opposition to בְּבוֹא־אִישׁ וגו', but can only mean at the entrance which was on the right side of the altar, *i.e.* at the southern entrance into the inner court. Again, the further variation, that according to the Chronicles (ver. 11), when the chest was full, an officer of the high priest came with the scribe (not the high priest himself), furnishes simply a more exact definition of our account, in which the high priest is named; just as, according to ver. 10, the high priest took the chest and bored a hole in the lid, which no intelligent commentator would understand as signifying that the high priest did it with his own hand. But there is a real difference between vers. 14 and 15 of our text and ver. 14 of the Chronicles, though the solution of this suggests itself at once on a closer inspection of the words. According to our account, there were no golden or silver vessels, basons, knives, bowls, etc., made with the money that was brought in, but it was given for the repairing of the house. In the Chronicles, on the contrary, it is stated that "when they had finished the repairs, they brought the remnant of the money to the king and Jehoiada, and he (the king) used it for vessels for the house of the Lord, for vessels of the service," etc. But if we take proper notice of כְּכַלּוֹתָם here, there is no ground for saying that there is any contradiction, since the words of our text affirm nothing more than that none of the money that came in was applied to the making of vessels of worship so long as the repairing of the building went on. What took place afterwards is not stated in our account, which is limited to the main fact; this we learn from the Chronicles. —Ver. 15. No return was required of the inspectors as to the money handed over to them, because they were convinced of their honesty.—Ver. 16. The money obtained from trespass-offerings and sin-offerings was not brought into the house of Jehovah, *i.e.* was not applied to the repairing of the temple, but was left for the priests. In the case of the trespass-offering compensation had to be made for the earthly debt according to the valuation of the priest, with the addition of a fifth in money; and this was assigned to the priests not only in the case of a מַעַל committed against Jehovah, but also when a neighbour had been injured in his property, if he had died in the meantime (see at Lev. v. 16 and Num. v. 9). On the other hand, in the case of the sin-offerings the priests received no money according to the law. Most of the commentators therefore assume, that those who lived at a distance had sent money to the priests, that they might offer sin-offerings with it, and what money was over they had retained for themselves. But there is not the slightest trace of any such custom, which is quite at variance with the idea of the sin-offering. It may probably have become a customary thing in the course of time, for those who presented these offerings to compensate the officiating priest for his trouble by a free-will gift.

Vers. 17 and 18. The brief account of *Hazael's campaign against Jerusalem* is completed by 2 Chron. xxiv. 23, 24. Hazael had gone down along the coast after defeating Israel (see ch. xiii. 3), for the purpose of making war upon Judah also, and had taken Gath, which Rehoboam had fortified (2 Chron. xi. 8). He then set his face, *i.e.* determined, to advance to Jerusalem; and Joash took the temple treasures, etc. According to the Chronicles, he sent an army against Judah and Jerusalem, which destroyed all the princes of the nation and sent much booty to the king to Damascus, as the small army of the Syrians had smitten the very large army of Judah. To protect Jerusalem, after this defeat, from being taken by the Syrians, Joash sent all the treasures of the temple and palace to Hazael, and so purchased the withdrawal of the Syrians. In this way the two brief accounts of the war may be both reconciled and explained; whereas the opinion, still repeated by Thenius, that the two passages treat of different wars, has no tenable ground to rest upon. The Philistian city of *Gath* (see the Comm. on Josh. xiii. 3) appears to have belonged at that time to the kingdom of Judah, so that the Gathites were not among the Philistines who made an incursion into Judah in the reign of Joram along with the Arabian tribes of the south (2 Chron. xxi. 16). And it is impossible to determine when Gath was wrested from the Syrians again; probably in the time of Joash the son of Jehoahaz of Israel, as he recovered from the Syrians all the cities which they had taken from the Israelites under Jehoahaz (ch. xiii. 25), and even smote Amaziah the king of Judæa at Bethshemesh and took him prisoner (ch. xiv. 13; 2 Chron. xxv. 21 sqq.). "All the consecrated things, which Jehoshaphat, Joram, and Ahaziah had consecrated, and his own consecrated things," *i.e.* what he (Joash) himself had consecrated. The existence of such temple treasures is not at variance either with the previous account of the repairing of the temple, for Joash would not use the consecrated offerings for the restoration of the temple, as the current revenue of the temple was sufficient for the purpose, or with 2 Chron. xxiv. 7, where it is stated that Athaliah and her sons had applied all the קָדְשֵׁי בֵית יְהוָה to the Baals (see at ch. xii. 5, p. 367); for even if we are to understand by the sons of Athaliah not bastard sons (Ewald, *Gesch.* iii. p. 582), but the brethren of Joram whom the Philistines and Arabians had carried off, Ahaziah and Joram, although they both of them served Baal, may, from political considerations, have now and then made consecrated gifts to the temple, if only in a passing fit of religious fear.

Vers. 19–21. *Conspiracy against Joash.*—Not long after the departure of the Syrians, who had left Joash, according to 2 Chron. xxiv. 25, with many wounds, his servants formed a conspiracy against him and slew him upon his bed in the house Millo, which goeth down to Silla. This description of the locality is perfectly obscure for us. The conjecture that בֵּית־מִלֹּא

was the house in the castle of *Millo* which is so frequently mentioned (see at 1 Kings ix. 15 and 2 Sam. v. 9), is precluded by the fact that this castle is always called הַמִּלֹּא (with the article). סִלָּא is regarded by many as an abbreviation of מְסִלָּה, "which goes down by the road;" and Thenius supposes that the reference is to the road which ran diagonally through the city from the Joppa gate to the Haram-area, corresponding to the present David's road. Others regard סִלָּא as the proper name of a place in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem. It is impossible to get any certain meaning out of it, unless we alter the text according to arbitrary assumptions, as Thenius has done. The conspirators were *Jozachar* the son of *Shimeath*, and *Jehozabad* the son of *Shomer*, according to ver. 21; but according to the Chronicles (ver. 26), they were *Zabad* the son of *Shimeath* the Ammonitess, and *Jehozabad* the son of *Shimrith* the Moabitess. The identity of the first names is perfectly obvious. זָבָד is a copyist's error for זָכָר, and this is the contracted form of יוֹזָכָר. The difference in the second: son of *Shomer* according to our text, and son of the *Shimrith* according to the Chronicles, has probably also arisen from a slip of the pen, since שמר might easily be occasioned by the dropping out of the ת from the defectively written שמרת, although it is also possible that *Shomer* may be the name of the grandfather. Joash was buried with his fathers in the city of David; but according to ver. 25 of the Chronicles he was not buried in the graves of the kings. The two statements are not irreconcilable; and there may be good historical ground for the account in the Chronicles, as Bertheau acknowledges with perfect justice, in spite of the suspicion which has been cast upon it by Thenius.

CHAP. XIII. REIGNS OF JEHOAHAZ AND JOASH, KINGS OF ISRAEL. DEATH OF ELISHA.

Vers. 1–9. Reign of Jehoahaz.—Jehu was followed by Jehoahaz his son, "in the twenty-third year of Joash of Judah." This synchronistic statement is not only at variance with ver. 10, but cannot be very well reconciled with ch. xii. 1. If Jehoahaz began to reign in the twenty-third year of Joash king of Judah, and reigned seventeen years, his son cannot have followed him after his death in the thirty-seventh year of Joash of Judah, as is stated in ver. 10, for there are only fourteen years and possibly a few months between the twenty-third and thirty-seventh years of Joash; and even if he ascended the throne at the commencement of the twenty-third year of the reign of Joash and died at the end of the thirty-seventh, they could only be reckoned as fifteen and not as seventeen years. Moreover, according to ch. xii. 1, Joash of Judah began to reign in the seventh year of Jehu, and therefore Athaliah, who ascended the throne at the same time as Jehu, reigned fully six years. If, therefore, the first year of Joash of Judah coincides with the seventh year of Jehu, the twenty-eighth year of Jehu must correspond to the twenty-second year of Joash of Judah; and in this year of Joash not only did Jehu die, but his son Jehoahaz ascended the throne. Consequently we must substitute the twenty-second year of Joash, or perhaps, still more correctly, the twenty-first year (Josephus), for the twenty-third.[1] If Jehu died in the earliest months of the twenty-eighth year of his reign, so that he only reigned twenty-seven years and one or two months, his death and his son's ascent of the throne might fall even in the closing months of the twenty-first year of the reign of Joash of Judah. And from the twenty-first to the thirty-seventh year of Joash, Jehoahaz may have reigned sixteen years and a few months, and his reign be described as lasting seventeen years.—Vers. 2, 3. As Jehoahaz trod in the footsteps of his forefathers and continued the sin of Jeroboam (the worship of the calves), the Lord punished Israel during his reign even more than in that of his predecessor. The longer and the more obstinately the sin was continued, the more severe did the punishment become. He gave them (the Israelites) into the power of the Syrian king Hazael and his son Benhadad כָּל־הַיָּמִים, "the whole time," *sc.* of the reign of Jehoahaz (*vid.* ver. 22); not of the reigns of Hazael and Benhadad, as Thenius supposes in direct opposition to vers. 24 and 25. According to ver. 7, the Syrians so far destroyed the Israelitish army, that only fifty horsemen, ten war-chariots, and ten thousand foot soldiers were left.—Vers. 4 sqq. In this oppression Jehoahaz prayed to the Lord (חִלָּה פְּנֵי י״ as in 1 Kings xiii. 6); and the Lord heard this prayer, because He saw their oppression at the hands of the Syrians, and gave Israel a saviour, so that they came out from the power of the Syrians and dwelt in their booths again, as before, *i.e.* were able to live peaceably again in their houses, without being driven off and led away by the foe. The saviour, מוֹשִׁיעַ, was neither an angel, nor the prophet Elisha, nor *quidam e ducibus Joasi*, as some of the earlier commentators supposed, nor a victory obtained by Jehoahaz over the Syrians, nor merely Jeroboam (Thenius); but the Lord gave them the saviour in the two successors of Jehoahaz, in the kings Jehoash and Jeroboam, the former of whom wrested from the Syrians all the cities that had been conquered by them under his father (ver. 25), while the latter restored the ancient boundaries of Israel (ch. xiv. 25). According to vers. 22–25, the oppression by the Syrians lasted as long as Jehoahaz lived; but after his death the Lord had compassion upon Israel, and after the death of Hazael, when his son Benhadad had become king, Jehoash recovered from Benhadad all the Israelitish cities that had been taken by the Syrians. It is obvious from this, that the oppression which Benhadad the son of Hazael inflicted upon Israel, according to ver. 3, falls within the period of his father's reign, so that it was not as king, but as commander-in-chief under his father, that he oppressed Israel, and therefore he is not even called king in ver. 3.—Ver. 6. "Only they departed not," etc., is inserted as a parenthesis and must be expressed thus: "although they departed not from the sin of Jeroboam."—Ver. 7. "For (כִּי) he had not left," etc., furnishes the ground for ver. 5: God gave them a saviour, . . . although they did not desist from the sin of Jeroboam, . . . for Israel had been brought to the last extremity; He (Jehovah) had left to Jehoahaz people (עָם, people of war), only fifty horsemen, etc. For הֶחֱטִי instead of הֶחֱטִיא (ver. 6), see at 1 Kings xxi. 21. The suffix בָּהּ in ver. 6 refers to חַטֹּאת, just as that in מִמֶּנָּה in ver. 2 (see at ch. iii. 3). "And even the Asherah was (still) standing at Samaria," probably from the time of Ahab downwards (1 Kings xvi. 33), since Jehu is not said to have destroyed it (ch. x. 26 sqq.). וַיְשִׂמֵם וגו׳, "and had made them like dust for trampling upon,"—an expression denoting utter destruction.—Vers. 8 and 9. Close of the reign of Jehoahaz. Jehoahaz had probably shown his might in the war with the Syrians, although he had been overcome.

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[1] On the other hand, Thenius, who follows des Vignoles and Winer, not only defends the correctness of the account "in the twenty-third year of Joash," because it agrees with the twenty-eight years' reign of Jehu (ch. x. 36), but also holds fast the seventeen years' duration of the reign of Jehoahaz on account of its agreement with ch. xiv. 1; for 6 years (Athaliah) + 40 years (Joash) = 46 years, and 28 years (Jehu) + 17 years (Jehoahaz) = 45 years; so that, as is there affirmed, Amaziah the son of Joash ascended the throne in the second year of Joash the son of Jehoahaz. But to arrive at this result he assumes that there is an error in ver. 10, namely, that instead of the thirty-seventh year we ought to read the thirty-ninth year there, according to the edit. Aldina of the LXX. But apart from the fact that, as we have shown above in the text, the datum "in the twenty-third year of Joash" does not harmonize with the twenty-eight years' reign of Jehu, this solution of the difference is overthrown by the circumstance that, in order to obtain this agreement between ver. 1 and ver. 14, Thenius reckons the years of the reigns not only of Athaliah and Joash, but also of Jehu and Jehoahaz, as full years (the former 16 + 40, the latter 28 + 17); whereas, in order to bring the datum in ver. 1 (in the twenty-third year of Joash) into harmony with the emendation proposed in ver. 10 (in the thirty-ninth year of Joash), he reckons the length of the reign of Jehoahaz as only sixteen years (instead of seventeen). For example, if Jehoahaz reigned seventeen years, supposing that he ascended the throne in the twenty-third year of Joash of Judah, he died in the fortieth year of Joash (not the thirty-ninth), and his son began to reign the same year. In that case Amaziah would have begun to reign in the first year of Jehoash of Israel, and not in the second, as is stated in ch. xiv. 1.—The reading of the LXX. (ed. Ald. ver. 10), "in the thirty-ninth year," is therefore nothing but a mistaken emendation resorted to for the purpose of removing a discrepancy, but of no critical value.

Vers. 10–13. REIGN OF JEHOASH OR JOASH OF ISRAEL.—On the commencement of his reign see at ver. 1. He also walked in the sins of Jeroboam (compare ver. 11 with vers. 2 and 6). The war with Amaziah referred to in ver. 12 is related in the history of this king in ch. xiv. 8–14; and the close of the reign of Joash is also recorded there (vers. 15 and 16) with the standing formula. And even here it ought not to be introduced till the end of the chapter, instead of in vers. 12 and 13, inasmuch as the verses which follow relate several things belonging to the reign of Joash. But as they are connected with the termination of Elisha's life, it was quite admissible to wind up the reign of Joash with ver. 13.

Vers. 14–21. ILLNESS AND DEATH OF THE PROPHET ELISHA.—Ver. 14. When Elisha was taken ill with the sickness of which he was to die, king Joash visited him and wept over his face, *i.e.* bending over the sick man as he lay, and exclaimed, "My father, my father! the chariot of Israel and horsemen thereof!" just as Elisha had mourned over the departure of Elijah (ch. ii. 12). This lamentation of the king at the approaching death of the prophet shows that Joash knew how to value his labours. And on account of this faith which was manifested in his recognition of the prophet's worth, the Lord gave the king another gracious assurance through the dying Elisha, which was confirmed by means of a symbolical action.—Vers. 15 sqq. "Take—said Elisha to Joash—bow and arrows, . . . and let thy hand pass over the bow" (הַרְכֵּב), *i.e.* stretch the bow. He then placed his hands upon the king's hands, as a sign that the power which was to be given to the bow-shot came from the Lord through the mediation of the prophet. He then directed him to open the window towards the east and shoot, adding as he shot off the arrow: "An arrow of salvation from the Lord, and an arrow of salvation against the Syrians; and thou wilt smite the Syrians at Aphek (see at 1 Kings xx. 26) to destruction." The arrow that was shot off was to be a symbol of the help of the Lord against the Syrians to their destruction. This promise the king was then to appropriate to himself through an act of his own. Elisha therefore directed him (ver. 18) to "take the arrows;" and when he had taken them, said: הַךְ אַרְצָה, "strike to the earth," *i.e.* shoot the arrows to the ground, not "smite the earth with the bundle of arrows" (Thenius), which neither agrees with the shooting of the first arrow, nor admits of a grammatical vindication; for הִכָּה, when used of an arrow, signifies to shoot and to strike with the arrow shot off, *i.e.* to wound or to kill (cf. ch. ix. 24, 1 Kings xxii. 34). The shooting of the arrows to the earth was intended to symbolize the overthrow of the Syrians. "And the king shot three times, and then stood (still)," *i.e.* left off shooting. —Ver. 19. Elisha was angry at this, and said: "Thou shouldst shoot five or six times, thou wouldst then have smitten the Syrians to destruction; but now thou wilt smite them three times." לְהַכּוֹת: it was to shoot, *i.e.* thou shouldst shoot; compare Ewald, § 237, *c*; and for אָז הִכִּיתָ, then hadst thou smitten, *vid.* Ewald, § 358, *a*. As the king was told that the arrow shot off signified a victory over the Syrians, he ought to have shot off all the arrows, to secure a complete victory over them. When, therefore, he left off after shooting only three times, this was a sign that he was wanting in the proper zeal for obtaining the divine promise, *i.e.* in true faith in the omnipotence of God to fulfil His promise.[1] Elisha was angry at this weakness of the king's faith, and told him that by leaving off so soon he had deprived himself of a perfect victory over the Syrians.—Vers. 20,

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[1] "When the king reflected upon the power of the kings of Syria, since he had not implicit faith in Elisha, he thought that it was enough if he struck the earth three times, fearing that the prophecy might not be fulfilled if he should strike more blows upon the ground."—CLERICUS.

21. Elisha then died at a great age. As he had been called by Elijah to be a prophet in the reign of Ahab and did not die till that of Joash, and forty-one years elapsed between the year that Ahab died and the commencement of the reign of Joash, he must have held his prophetical office for at least fifty years, and have attained the age of eighty. "And they buried him just as marauding bands of Moabites entered the land. And it came to pass, that at the burial of a man they saw the marauding bands coming, and placed the dead man in the greatest haste in the grave of Elisha," for the purpose of escaping from the enemy. But when the (dead) man touched the bones of Elisha, he came to life again, and rose up upon his feet. וּגְדוּדֵי מוֹאָב וגו׳ is a circumstantial clause. The difficult expression בָּא שָׁנָה, "a year had come," can only have the meaning given by the LXX. and Chald.: "when a year had come," and evidently indicates that the burial of Elisha occurred at the time when the yearly returning bands of Moabitish marauders invaded the land. Ewald (*Krit. Gramm.* p. 528) would therefore read בּוֹא, a coming of the year, in which case the words would be grammatically subordinate to the main clause. Luther renders it "the same year," *in ipso anno*, after the Vulgate and Syriac, as if the reading had been בָּהּ שָׁנָה. הֵם, they, the people who had just buried a man. יַשְׁלִיכוּ, not threw, but placed hastily. וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיִּגַּע: and the man went and touched. וַיֵּלֶךְ serves as a pictorial delineation of the thought, that as soon as the dead man touched the bones of Elisha he came to life. הָלַךְ is not only applied to the motion of inanimate objects, but also to the gradual progress of any transaction. The conjecture of Thenius and Hitzig, וַיֵּלְכוּ, "and they went away," is quite unsuitable. The earlier Israelites did not bury their dead in coffins, but wrapped them in linen cloths and laid them in tombs hewn out of the rock. The tomb was then covered with a stone, which could easily be removed. The dead man, who was placed thus hurriedly in the tomb which had been opened, might therefore easily come into contact with the bones of Elisha. The design of this miracle of the restoration of the dead man to life was not to show how even in the grave Elisha surpassed his master Elijah in miraculous power (Ephr. Syr. and others), but to impress the seal of divine attestation upon the prophecy of the dying prophet concerning the victory of Joash over the Syrians (Wisd. xlviii. 13, 14), since the Lord thereby bore witness that He was not the God of the dead, but of the

living, and that His spirit was raised above death and corruptibility.—The opinion that the dead man was restored to life again in a natural manner, through the violent shaking occasioned by the fall, or through the coolness of the tomb, needs no refutation.

Vers. 22–25. The prophecy which Elisha uttered before his death is here followed immediately by the account of its fulfilment, and to this end the oppression of the Israelites by Hazael is mentioned once more, together with that turn of affairs which took place through the compassion of God after the death of Hazael and in the reign of his son Benhadad. לָחַץ is a pluperfect: "Hazael *had* oppressed" (for the fact itself compare vers. 4 and 7). For the sake of the covenant made with the patriarchs the Lord turned again to the Israelites, and would not destroy them, and did not cast them away from His face עַד עַתָּה ("till now"), as was the case afterwards, but delivered them from the threatening destruction through the death of Hazael. For in the reign of his son and successor Benhadad, Joash the son of Jehoahaz took from him again (וַיָּשָׁב is to be connected with וַיִּקַּח) the cities which he (Hazael) had taken from Jehoahaz in the war. These cities which Hazael had wrested from Jehoahaz were on this side of the Jordan, for Hazael had conquered all Gilead in the time of Jehu (ch. x. 32, 33). Joash recovered the former from Benhadad, whilst his son Jeroboam reconquered Gilead also (see at ch. xiv. 25).

CHAP. XIV. REIGNS OF AMAZIAH OF JUDAH, AND JEROBOAM II. OF ISRAEL.

Vers. 1–22. REIGN OF AMAZIAH OF JUDAH (cf. 2 Chron. xxv.).—Vers. 1–7. *Length and spirit of his reign, and his victory over the Edomites.*—Ver. 1. Amaziah began to reign in the second year of Joash of Israel. Now as Joash of Israel ascended the throne, according to ch. xiii. 10, in the thirty-seventh year of Joash of Judah, the latter cannot have reigned thirty-nine full years, which might be reckoned as forty (ch. xii. 1), according to the principle mentioned at p. 186 sq. of reckoning the current years as complete years, if the commencement of his reign took place a month or two before Nisan, and his death occurred a month or two after, without its being necessary to assume a regency.—Vers. 2, 3. Amaziah reigned twenty-nine years in the same theocratical spirit as his father Joash, only not like his ancestor David, *i.e.*, according to the correct explanation in 2 Chron. xxv. 2, not with לֵבָב שָׁלֵם (see at 1 Kings xi. 4), since Amaziah, like his father Joash (see at ch. xii. 3), fell into idolatry in the closing years of his reign (cf. 2 Chron. xxv. 14 sqq.).—Only the high places were not taken away, etc.—Vers. 5, 6. After establishing his own government, he punished the murderers of his father with death; but, according to the law in Deut. xxiv. 16, he did not slay their children also, as was commonly the custom in the East in ancient times, and may very frequently have been done in Israel as well. The *Chethîb* יָמוּת is correct, and the *Keri* יֻמַת is an unnecessary alteration made after Deuteronomy.—Ver. 7. The brief account of the defeat of the Edomites in the Salt Valley and of the taking of the city of *Sela* is completed by 2 Chron. xxv. 6–16. According to the latter, Amaziah sought to strengthen his own considerable army by the addition of 100,000 Israelitish mercenaries; but at the exhortation of a prophet he sent the hired Israelites away again, at which they were so enraged, that on their way home they plundered several of the cities of Judah and put many men to death. The Edomites had revolted from Judah in the reign of Joram (ch. viii. 20 sqq.); Amaziah now sought to re-establish his rule over them, in which he was so far successful, that he completely defeated them, slaying 10,000 in the battle and then taking their capital, so that his successor Uzziah was also able to incorporate the Edomitish port of Elath in his own kingdom once more (ver. 22). On the Salt Valley (גֵּי־הַמֶּלַח for גֵּיא־הַמֶּלַח in the Chronicles), a marshy salt plain in the south of the Dead Sea, see at 2 Sam. viii. 13. According to ver. 12 of the Chronicles, in addition to the 10,000 who were slain in battle, 10,000 Edomites were taken prisoners and cast headlong alive from the top of a rock. הַסֶּלַע (*the* rock) with the article, because the epithet is founded upon the peculiar nature of the city, was probably the capital of the Edomites, called by the Greeks ἡ Πέτρα, and bore this name from its situation and the mode in which it was built, since it was erected in a valley surrounded by rocks, and that in such a manner that the houses were partly hewn in the natural rock. Of this commercial city, which was still flourishing in the first centuries of the Christian era, splendid ruins have been preserved in a valley on the eastern side of the ghor which runs down to the Elanitic Gulf, about two days' journey from the southern extremity of the Dead Sea, on the east of Mount *Hor*, to which the Crusaders gave the name of *vallis*

Moysi, and which the Arabs still call *Wady Musa* (see Robinson, *Pal.* ii. pp. 512 sqq., and for the history of this city, pp. 574 sqq., and Ritter's *Erdkunde*, xiv. pp. 1103 sqq.).

Vers. 8–14. *War with Joash of Israel.*—Ver. 8. Amaziah then sent a challenge to the Israelitish king Joash to go to war with him. The outward reason for this was no doubt the hostile acts that had been performed by the Israelitish troops, which had been hired for the war with Edom and then sent back again (2 Chron. xxv. 13). But the inward ground was the pride which had crept upon Amaziah in consequence of his victory over the Edomites, and had so far carried him away, that he not only forgot the Lord his God, to whom he was indebted for this victory, and brought to Jerusalem the gods of the Edomites which he had taken in the war and worshipped them, and silenced with threats the prophet who condemned this idolatry (2 Chron. xxv. 14 sqq.), but in his proud reliance upon his own power challenged the Israelitish king to war.—Vers. 9, 10. Jehoash (Joash) answered his insolent challenge, "Come, we will see one another face to face," *i.e.* measure swords with one another in war, with a similar fable to that with which Jotham had once instructed his fellow-citizens (Judg. ix. 8 sqq.). "The thorn-bush on Lebanon asked the cedar on Lebanon for its daughter as a wife for his son, and beasts of the field went by and trampled down the thorn-bush." This fable is, of course, not to be interpreted literally, as though Amaziah were the thorn-bush, and Jehoash the cedar, and the wild beasts the warriors; but the thorn-bush putting itself upon an equality with the cedar is a figurative representation of a proud man overrating his strength, and the desire expressed to the cedar of a wish surpassing the bounds of one's condition; so that Thenius is not warranted in inferring from this that Amaziah had in his mind the subjugation of Israel to Judah again. The trampling down of the thorn-bush by a wild beast is only meant to set forth the sudden overthrow and destruction which may come unexpectedly upon the proud man in the midst of his daring plans. Ver. 10 contains the application of the parable. The victory over Edom has made thee high-minded. נְשָׂאֲךָ לִבֶּךָ: thy heart has lifted thee up, equivalent to, thou hast become high-minded. הִכָּבֵד, "be honoured," *i.e.* be content with the fame thou hast acquired at Edom, "and stay at home." Wherefore shouldst thou meddle with misfortune? הִתְגָּרֶה, to engage in conflict or war. Misfortune is thought of as an enemy, with whom he wanted to fight.—Vers. 11, 12. But Amaziah paid no attention to this warning. A battle was fought at *Beth-shemesh* (Ain-Shems, on the border of Judah and Dan, see at Josh. xv. 10); Judah was smitten by Israel, so that every one fled to his home.—Ver. 13. Jehoash took king Amaziah prisoner, and then came to Jerusalem, and had four hundred cubits of the wall broken down at the gate of Ephraim to the corner gate, and then returned to Samaria with the treasures of the palace and temple, and with hostages. The *Chethîb* ויבאו is to be pointed וַיָּבאֹו, the vowel ֹו being placed after א, as in several other cases (see Ewald, § 18, *b*). There is no ground for altering יְבִיאֵהוּ after the Chronicles (Thenius), although the reading in the Chronicles elucidates the thought. For if Jehoash took Amaziah prisoner at Beth-shemesh and then came to Jerusalem, he no doubt brought his prisoner with him, for Amaziah remained king and reigned for fifteen years after the death of Jehoash (ver. 17). The *Ephraim gate,* which is generally supposed to be the same as the gate of Benjamin (Jer. xxxvii. 13, xxxviii. 7; Zech. xiv. 10; compare Neh. viii. 16, xii. 39), stood in the middle of the north wall of Jerusalem, through which the road to Benjamin and Ephraim ran; and the *corner gate* was at the north-western corner of the same wall, as we may see from Jer. xxxi. 38 and Zech. xiv. 10. If, then, Jehoash had four hundred cubits of the wall thrown down at the gate Ephraim *to* the corner gate, the distance between the two gates was not more than four hundred cubits, which applies to the northern wall of Zion, but not to the second wall, which defended the lower city towards the north, and must have been longer, and which, according to 2 Chron. xxxii. 5, was probably built for the first time by Hezekiah (*vid.* Krafft, *Topographie v. Jerus.* pp. 117 sqq.). Jehoash destroyed this portion of the Zion wall, that the city might be left defenceless, as Jerusalem could be most easily taken on the level northern side.[1]—The treasures of the temple and palace, which Jehoash took away, cannot, according to ch. xii. 19, have been very considerable. בְּנֵי הַתַּעֲרֻבוֹת, sons of the citizenships, *i.e.* hostages (*obsides*, Vulg.). He took hostages in return for the release of Amaziah, as pledges that he would keep the peace.

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[1] Thenius takes a different view. According to the description which Josephus gives of this event (*Ant.* ix. 9, 3), he assumes that Jehoash had the four hundred cubits of the city wall thrown down, that he might get a magnificent gate (?) for himself and the invading army; and he endeavours to support this assumption by stating that the space between the Ephraim gate and the corner gate was much more than four hundred cubits. But this

Vers. 15-17. The repetition of the notice concerning the end of the reign of Joash, together with the formula from ch. xiii. 12 and 13, may probably be explained from the fact, that in the annals of the kings of Israel it stood after the account of the war between Jehoash and Amaziah. This may be inferred from the circumstance that the name of Joash is spelt invariably יְהוֹאָשׁ here, whereas in the closing notices in ch. xiii. 12 and 13 we have the later form יוֹאָשׁ, the one which was no doubt adopted by the author of our books. But he might be induced to give these notices once more as he found them in his original sources, from the statement in ver. 17, that Amaziah outlived Jehoash fifteen years, seeing therein a manifestation of the grace of God, who would not destroy Amaziah notwithstanding his pride, but delivered him, through the death of his victor, from further injuries at his hands. As Amaziah ascended the throne in the second year of the sixteen years' reign of Jehoash, and before his war with Israel made war upon the Edomites and overcame them, the war with Israel can only fall in the closing years of Jehoash, and this king cannot very long have survived his triumph over the king of Judah.

Vers. 18-22. *Conspiracy against Amaziah.*—Ver. 19. Amaziah, like his father Joash, did not die a natural death. They made a conspiracy against him at Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish, whither murderers were sent after him, who slew him there. The earlier commentators sought for the cause of this conspiracy in the unfortunate result of the war with Jehoash; but this conjecture is at variance with the circumstance that the conspiracy did not break out till fifteen years or more after that event. It is true that in 2 Chron. xxv. 27 we read "from the time that Amaziah departed from the Lord, they formed a conspiracy against him;" but even this statement cannot be understood in any other way than that Amaziah's apostasy gave occasion for discontent, which eventually led to a conspiracy.

assertion is based upon an assumption which cannot be sustained, namely, that the second wall built by Hezekiah (2 Chron. xxxii. 5) was already in existence in the time of Amaziah, and that the gates mentioned were in this wall. The subjective view of the matter in Josephus has no more worth than that of a simple conjecture.

For his apostasy began with the introduction of Edomitish deities into Jerusalem after the defeat of the Edomites, and therefore before the war with Jehoash, in the first part of his reign, whereas the conspiracy cannot possibly have lasted fifteen years or more before it came to a head. *Lachish*, in the lowlands of Judah, has probably been preserved in the ruins of *Um Lakis* (see at Josh x. 3).—Ver. 20. "They lifted him upon the horses;" *i.e.* upon the hearse to which the king's horses had been harnessed, and brought him to Jerusalem, where he was buried with his fathers, *i.e.* in the royal tomb.—Ver. 21. All the people of Judah, *i.e.* the whole nation, not the whole of the men of war (Thenius), thereupon made his son *Azariah* (Uzziah) king, who was only sixteen years old. עֲזַרְיָה or עֲזַרְיָהוּ is the name given to this king here and ch. xv. 1, 6, 8, 17, 23, and 27, and 1 Chron. iii. 12; whereas in ch. xv. 13, 30, 32, 34, 2 Chron. xxvi. 1, 3, 11, etc., and also Isa. i. 1, vi. 1, Hos. i. 1, Amos i. 1, and Zech. xiv. 5, he is called עֻזִּיָּה or עֻזִּיָּהוּ (Uzziah). This variation in the name is too constant to be attributable to a copyist's error. Even the conjecture that *Azariah* adopted the name *Uzziah* as king, or that it was given to him by the soldiers after a successful campaign (Thenius), does not explain the use of the two names in our historical books. We must rather assume that the two names, which are related in meaning, were used promiscuously. עֲזַרְיָה signifies "in Jehovah is help;" עֻזִּיָּה, "whose strength is Jehovah." This is favoured by the circumstance adduced by Bertheau, that among the descendants of Kohath we also find an Uzziah who bears the name *Azariah* (1 Chron. vi. 9 and 21), and similarly among the descendants of Heman an *Uzziel* with the name *Azarel* (1 Chron. xxv. 4 and 18).—Ver. 22. Immediately after his ascent of the throne, Uzziah built, *i.e.* fortified, *Elath*, the Idumæan port (see at 1 Kings ix. 26), and restored it to Judah again. It is evident from this that Uzziah completed the renewed subjugation of Edom which his father had begun. The position in which this notice stands, immediately after his ascent of the throne and before the account of the duration and character of his reign, may be explained in all probability from the importance of the work itself, which not only distinguished the commencement of his reign, but also gave evidence of its power.

Vers. 23–29. Reign of Jeroboam II. of Israel.—Ver. 23.

The statement that Jeroboam the son of Joash (Jehoash) ascended the throne in the fifteenth year of Amaziah, agrees with ver. 17, according to which Amaziah outlived Jehoash fifteen years, since Amaziah reigned twenty-nine years. On the other hand, the forty-one years' duration of his reign does not agree with the statement in ch. xv. 8, that his son Zachariah did not become king till the thirty-eighth year of Azariah (Uzziah); and therefore Thenius proposes to alter the number 41 into 51, Ewald into 53. For further remarks, see ch. xv. 8. Jeroboam also adhered firmly to the image-worship of his ancestors, but he raised his kingdom again to great power.—Ver. 25. 'He brought back (הֵשִׁיב), *i.e.* restored, the boundary of Israel from towards Hamath in the north, to the point to which the kingdom extended in the time of Solomon (1 Kings viii. 65), to the sea of the Arabah (the present Ghor), *i.e.* to the Dead Sea (compare Deut. iii. 17, and iv. 49, from which this designation of the southern border of the kingdom of the ten tribes arose), "according to the word of the Lord, which He had spoken through the prophet Jonah," who had probably used this designation of the southern boundary, which was borrowed from the Pentateuch, in the announcement which he made. The extent of the kingdom of Israel in the reign of Jeroboam is defined in the same manner in Amos vi. 14, but instead of יָם הָעֲרָבָה the נַחַל הָעֲרָבָה is mentioned, *i.e.* in all probability the Wady *el Ahsy*, which formed the boundary between Moab and Edom; from which we may see that Jeroboam had also subjugated the Moabites to his kingdom, which is not only rendered probable by ch. iii. 6 sqq., but is also implied in the words that he restored the former boundary of the kingdom of Israel.—On the prophet Jonah, the son of Amittai, see the Comm. on Jon. i. 1. *Gath-Hepher*, in the tribe of Zebulun, is the present village of *Meshed*, to the north of Nazareth (see at Josh. xix. 13).—Vers. 26, 27. The higher ground for this strengthening of Israel in the time of Jeroboam was to be found in the compassion of God. The Lord saw the great oppression and helpless condition of Israel, and had not yet pronounced the decree of rejection. He therefore sent help through Jeroboam. מֹרֶה מְאֹד without the article, and governed by אֳנִי ישׂ' (see Ewald, § 293, *a*), signifies very bitter, מֹרֶה having taken the meaning of מָרַר. This is the explanation adopted in all the ancient versions, and also by Dietrich in Ges. *Lex.* וְאֶפֶס עָצוּר וגו', verbatim from Deut.

xxxii. 36, to show that the kingdom of Israel had been brought to the utmost extremity of distress predicted there by Moses; and it was necessary that the Lord should interpose with His help, if His people were not utterly to perish. לֹא דִבֶּר: He had not yet spoken, *i.e.* had not yet uttered the decree of rejection through the mouth of a prophet. To blot out the name under the heavens is an abbreviated expression for: among the nations who dwelt under the heavens.—Vers. 28, 29. Of the rest of the history of Jeroboam we have nothing more than an intimation that he brought back Damascus and Hamath of Judah to Israel, *i.e.* subjugated it again to the kingdom of Israel. לִיהוּדָה is a periphrastic form for the genitive, as proper names do not admit of any form of the construct state, and in this case the simple genitive would not have answered so well to the fact. For the meaning is: "whatever in the two kingdoms of Damascus and Hamath had formerly belonged to Judah in the times of David and Solomon." By Damascus and Hamath we are not to understand the cities, but the kingdoms; for not only did the city of Hamath never belong to the kingdom of Israel, but it was situated outside the boundaries laid down by Moses for Israel (see at Num. xxxiv. 8). It cannot, therefore, have been re-conquered (הֵשִׁיב) by Jeroboam. It was different with the city of Damascus, which David had conquered and even Solomon had not permanently lost (see at 1 Kings xi. 24). Consequently in the case of Damascus the capital is included in the kingdom.—Ver. 29. As Jeroboam reigned forty-one years, his death occurred in the twenty-seventh year of Uzziah. If, then, his son did not begin to reign till the thirty-eighth year of Uzziah, as is stated in ch. xv. 8, he cannot have come to the throne immediately after his father's death (see at ch. xv. 8).

CHAP. XV. REIGNS OF AZARIAH OF JUDAH, ZACHARIAH, SHALLUM, MENAHEM, PEKAHIAH, AND PEKAH OF ISRAEL, AND JOTHAM OF JUDAH.

Vers. 1–7. REIGN OF AZARIAH (UZZIAH) OF JUDAH (cf. 2 Chron. xxvi.).—The statement that "in the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam Azariah began to reign" is at variance with ch. xiv. 2, 16, 17, and 23. If, for example, Azariah ascended the throne in the fifteenth year of Joash of Israel, and with his twenty-nine years' reign outlived Joash fifteen years (ch. xiv. 2, 17); if, moreover, Jeroboam followed his father Joash in the fifteenth year of Amaziah (ch. xiv. 23), and Amaziah died in the fifteenth year of Jeroboam; Azariah (Uzziah) must have become king in the fifteenth year of Jeroboam, since, according to ch. xiv. 21, the people made him king after the murder of his father, which precludes the supposition of an interregnum. Consequently the *datum* "in the twenty-seventh year" can only have crept into the text through the confounding of the numerals טו (15) with כז (27), and we must therefore read "in the fifteenth year."—Vers. 2 sqq. Beside the general characteristics of Uzziah's fifty-two years' reign, which are given in the standing formula, not a single special act is mentioned, although, according to 2 Chron. xxvi., he raised his kingdom to great earthly power and prosperity; probably for no other reason than because his enterprises had exerted no permanent influence upon the development of the kingdom of Judah, but all the useful fruits of his reign were destroyed again by the ungodly Ahaz. Uzziah did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, as his father Amaziah had done. For as the latter was unfaithful to the Lord in the closing years of his reign, so did Uzziah seek God only so long as Zechariah, who was experienced in divine visions, remained alive, and God gave success to his enterprises, so that during this time he carried on successful wars against the Philistines and Arabians, fortified the walls of Jerusalem with strong towers, built watch-towers in the desert, and constructed cisterns for the protection and supply of his numerous flocks, promoted agriculture and vine-growing, and organized a numerous and well-furnished army (2 Chron. xxvi. 5–15). But the great power to which he thereby attained produced such haughtiness, that he wanted to make himself high priest in his kingdom after the manner of the heathen kings, and usurping the sacred functions, which belonged according to the law to the Levitical priests alone, to offer incense in the temple, for which he was punished with leprosy upon the spot (ver. 5 compared with 2 Chron. xxvi. 16 sqq.). The king's leprosy is described in our account also as a punishment from God. וַיְנַגַּע יי׳: Jehovah smote him, and he became leprous. This presupposes an act of guilt, and confirms the fuller account of this guilt given in the Chronicles, which Thenius, following the example of De Wette and Winer, could only call in question on the erroneous assumption "that the powerful king wanted to restore the regal high-priesthood exercised by David and Solomon." Oehler (Herzog's *Cycl.*)

has already shown that such an opinion is perfectly "groundless," since it is nowhere stated that David and Solomon performed with their own hands the functions assigned in the law to the priests in connection with the offering of sacrifice, as the co-operation of the priests is not precluded in connection with the sacrifices presented by these kings (2 Sam. vi. 17, and 1 Kings iii. 4, etc.).—Uzziah being afflicted with leprosy, was obliged to live in a separate house, and appoint his son Jotham as president of the royal house to judge the people, *i.e.* to conduct the administration of the kingdom.—The time when this event occurred is not stated either in our account or in the Chronicles. But this punishment from God cannot have fallen upon him before the last ten years of his fifty-two years' reign, because his son, who was only twenty-five years old when his father died (ver. 33, and 2 Chron. xxvii. 1), undertook the administration of the affairs of the kingdom at once, and therefore must have been at least fifteen years old. בֵּית הַחָפְשִׁית is taken by Winer, Gesenius, and others, after the example of Iken, to signify *nosocomium*, an infirmary or lazar-house, in accordance with the verb خفش, *jecit*, II. *debilis, imbecillis fuit.* But this meaning cannot be traced in Hebrew, where חָפְשִׁי is used in no other sense than free, set at liberty, *manumissus.* Consequently the rendering adopted by Aquila is correct, *οἶκος ἐλευθερίας*; and the explanation given by Kimchi of this epithet is, that the persons who lived there were those who were sent away from human society, or perhaps more correctly, those who were released from the world and its privileges and duties, or cut off from intercourse with God and man.—Ver. 7. When Uzziah died, he was buried with his fathers in the city of David, but because he died of leprosy, not in the royal family tomb, but, as the Chronicles (ver. 23) add to complete the account, "in the burial-field of the kings;" so that he was probably buried in the earth according to our mode. His son Jotham did not become king till after Uzziah's death, as he had not been regent, but only the administrator of the affairs of the kingdom during his father's leprosy.

Vers. 8–12. REIGN OF ZACHARIAH OF ISRAEL.—Ver. 8. "In the thirty-eighth year of Uzziah, Zachariah the son of Jeroboam became king over Israel six months." As Jeroboam died in the twenty-seventh year of Uzziah, according to our remarks on ch.

xiv. 29, there is an interregnum of eleven years between his death and the ascent of the throne by his son, as almost all the chronologists since the time of Usher have assumed. It is true that this interregnum may be set aside by assuming that Jeroboam reigned fifty-one or fifty-three years instead of forty-one, without the synchronism being altered in consequence. But as it is not very probable that the numeral letters נב or נג should be confounded with מא, and as the conflict for the possession of the throne, which we meet with after the very brief reign of Zachariah, when taken in connection with various allusions in the prophecies of Hosea, rather favours the idea that the anarchy broke out immediately after the death of Jeroboam, we regard the assumption of an interregnum as resting on a better foundation than the removal of the chronological discrepancy by an alteration of the text.—Vers. 9 sqq. Zachariah also persevered in the sin of his fathers in connection with the calf-worship; therefore the word of the Lord pronounced upon Jehu (ch. x. 30) was fulfilled in him.—*Shallum* the son of Jabesh formed a conspiracy and put him to death קָבָל־עָם, before people, *i.e.* openly before the eyes of all.[1] As Israel would not suffer itself to be brought to repentance and to return to the Lord, its God and King, by the manifestations of divine grace in the times of Joash and Jeroboam, any more than by the severe judgments that preceded them, and the earnest admonitions of the prophets Hosea and Amos; the judgment of rejection could not fail eventually to burst forth upon the nation, which so basely despised the grace, long-suffering, and covenant-faithfulness of God. We therefore see the kingdom hasten with rapid steps towards its destruction after the death of Jeroboam. In the sixty-two years between the death of Jeroboam and the conquest of Samaria by Shalmaneser anarchy prevailed twice, in all for the space of twenty years, and six kings followed one another, only one of whom, viz. Menahem, died a natural death, so as to be succeeded by his son upon the throne. The other five were dethroned and murdered by rebels, so that, as Witsius has truly said, with the murder of Zachariah not only was the declaration of Hosea (i. 4) fulfilled, "I visit the blood-guiltiness of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu," but also the parallel utterance, "and I destroy the kingdom of the house of Israel," since the monarchy in Israel really ceased with Zachariah. "For the successors of Zachariah were not so much kings as robbers and tyrants, unworthy of the august name of kings, who lost with ignominy the tyranny which they had wickedly acquired, and as wickedly exercised."—WITSIUS, *Δεκαφυλ.* p. 320.

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[1] Ewald in the most marvellous manner has made קבל־עם into a king (*Gesch.* iii. p. 598).

Vers. 13–16. REIGN OF SHALLUM.—Shallum reigned only a full month (יֶרַח־יָמִים, as in Deut. xxi. 13; see at Gen. xxix. 14). *Menahem* the son of Gadi then made war upon him from Tirzah; and by him he was smitten and slain. Menahem must have been a general or the commander-in-chief, as Josephus affirms. As soon as he became king he smote *Tiphsach,*—*i.e.* Thapsacus on the Euphrates, which has long since entirely disappeared, probably to be sought for in the neighbourhood of the present *Rakka,* by the ford of *el Hamman,* the north-eastern border city of the Israelitish kingdom in the time of Solomon (1 Kings v. 4), which came into the possession of the kingdom of Israel again when the ancient boundaries were restored by Jeroboam II. (ch. xiv. 25 and 28), but which had probably revolted again during the anarchy which arose after the death of Jeroboam,—"and all that were therein, and the territory thereof, from Tirzah; because they opened not (to him), therefore he smote it, and had them that were with child ripped up." מִתִּרְצָה does not mean that Menahem laid the land or district waste from Tirzah to Tiphsach, but is to be taken in connection with יַכֶּה in this sense: he smote Tiphsach proceeding from Tirzah, etc. The position of this notice, namely, immediately after the account of the usurpation of the throne by Menahem and before the history of his reign, is analogous to that concerning Elath in the case of Uzziah (ch. xiv. 22), and, like the latter, is to be accounted for from the fact that the expedition of Menahem against Tiphsach formed the commencement of his reign, and, as we may infer from ver. 19, became very eventful not only for his own reign, but also for the kingdom of Israel generally. The reason why he proceeded from Tirzah against Tiphsach, was no doubt that it was in Tirzah, the present Tallusa, which was only three hours to the east of Samaria (see at 1 Kings xiv. 17), that the army of which Menahem was commander was posted, so that he had probably gone to Samaria with only a small body of men to overthrow Shallum, the murderer of Zachariah and usurper of the throne, and to make himself king. It is possible that the army commanded by Menahem had already been collected in Tirzah to march against the city of Tiphsach, which had revolted from Israel when Shallum seized upon the throne by the murder of Zachariah; so that after Menahem had removed the usurper, he carried out at once the campaign already resolved upon, and having taken Tiphsach, punished it most cruelly for its revolt. On the cruel custom of ripping up the women with child, *i.e.* of cutting open their wombs, see ch. viii. 12, Amos i. 13, and Hos. xiv. 1. *Tiphsach, Thapsacus,* appears to have been a strong fortress; and from its situation on the western bank of the Euphrates, at the termination of the great trade-road from Egypt, Phœnicia, and Syria to Mesopotamia and the kingdoms of Inner Asia (Movers, *Phöniz.* ii. 2, pp. 164, 165; and Ritter, *Erdkunde,* x. pp. 1114–15), the possession of it was of great importance to the kingdom of Israel.[1]

Vers. 17–22. REIGN OF MENAHEM.—Menahem's reign lasted ten full years (see at ver. 23), and resembled that of his predecessors in its attitude towards God. In ver 18, the expression כָּל־יָמָיו (all his days) is a very strange one, inasmuch as no such definition of time occurs in connection with the usual formula, either in this chapter (cf. vers. 24 and 28) or elsewhere (cf. ch. iii. 3, x. 31, xiii. 2, 11, etc.). The LXX. have instead of this, *ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις αὐτοῦ* (in his days). If we compare ver. 29, בִּימֵי פֶּקַח בָּא (in the days of Pekah came, etc.), בְּיָמָיו בָּא might possibly be regarded as the original reading, from which a copyist's error כָּל־יָמָיו בָּא arose, after which כָּל־יָמָיו was connected with the preceding clause.—Ver. 19. In the time of Menahem, *Pul* king of Assyria invaded the land, and Menahem gave him 1000 talents of silver—more than two and a half millions of thalers (£375,000)—" that his hands might be with him, to confirm the kingdom in his hand." These words are understood by the majority of commentators from the time of Ephraem Syrus, when taken in connection with Hos. v. 13, as signifying that Menahem invited Pul, that he might establish his government with his assistance. But the words of Hosea, " Ephraim goes to the Assyrian," *sc.* to seek for help (ch. v. 13, cf. vii. 11 and viii. 9), are far too general to be taken as referring specially to Menahem; and the assumption that Menahem invited Pul into the land is opposed by the words in the verse before us, " Pul came over the land." Even the further statement that Menahem gave to Pul 1000 talents of silver when he came into the land, that he might help him to establish his government, presupposes at the most that a party opposed to Menahem had invited the Assyrians, to overthrow the usurper. At any rate, we may imagine, in perfect harmony with the words of our account, that Pul marched against Israel of his own accord, possibly induced to do so by Menahem's expedition against Thapsacus, and that his coming was simply turned to account as a good opportunity for disputing Menahem's possession of the throne he had usurped, so that Menahem, by paying the tribute mentioned, persuaded the Assyrian to withdraw, that he might deprive the opposing party of the Assyrian support, and thereby establish his own rule.—Ver. 20. To collect the requisite amount, Menahem imposed upon all persons of property a tax of fifty shekels each. יֹצֵא with עַל, he caused to arise, *i.e.* made a collection. הוֹצִיא in a causative sense, from יָצָא, to arise, to be paid (ch. xii. 13). גִּבּוֹרֵי חַיִל: not warriors, but men of property, as in Ruth ii. 1, 1 Sam. ix. 1. לְאִישׁ אֶחָד, for the individual. *Pul* was the first king of Assyria who invaded the kingdom of Israel and prepared the way for the conquest of this kingdom by his successors, and for the extension of the Assyrian power as far as Egypt. According to the thorough investigation made by Marc. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch. Assurs u. Babels*, pp. 128 sqq.), *Pul*, whose name has not yet been discovered upon the Assyrian monuments, was the last king of Nineveh of the family of the *Derketades*, who still ruled over Babylon according to Berosus, and the last king but one of this dynasty.[1]

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[1] There is no foundation for the view propounded by Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 599), Simson (*Hosea*, pp. 20, 21), Thenius, and many others, that *Tiphsach* was a city between Tirzah and Samaria, which Menahem laid waste on his march from Tirzah to Samaria to dethrone Shallum; for it rests upon nothing more than the perfectly unwarrantable and ungrammatical combination of מתרצה with את־גבוליה, "its boundaries toward Tirzah" (Sims.), and upon the two worthless objections: (1) that the great distance of מתרצה from יכה precludes the rendering "going out from Tirzah;" and (2) that Menahem was not the man to be able to conquer Thapsacus on the Euphrates. But there is no foundation for the latter assertion, as we have no standard by which to estimate the strength and bravery of the Israelitish army commanded by Menahem. And the first objection falls to the ground with the correct rendering of מתרצה, viz. "proceeding from Tirzah," which is preferred even by Ewald and Thenius. With this rendering, the words by no means affirm that Menahem smote Tiphsach from Tirzah *on the way to Samaria.* This is merely an inference drawn from ver. 13, according to which Menahem went from Tirzah to Samaria to overthrow Shallum. But this inference is open to the following objections: (1) that it is very improbable that there was a strong fortress between Tirzah and Samaria, which Menahem was obliged to take on his march before he could overthrow the usurper in the capital of the kingdom; and (2) that the name Tiphsach, *trajectus*, ford, is by no means a suitable one for a city situated on the mountains between Tirzah and Samaria, and therefore, in order to carry out the hypothesis in question, Thenius proposes to alter *Tiphsach* into *Tappuach*, without any critical warrant for so doing.

Vers. 23–26. Reign of Pekahiah.—Pekahiah the son of Menahem began to reign "in the fiftieth year of Uzziah." As Menahem had begun to reign in the thirty-ninth year of Uzziah and reigned ten years, he must have died in the forty-ninth year of Uzziah; and therefore, if his son did not become king till the fiftieth year, some months must have elapsed between the death of Menahem and Pekahiah's ascent of the throne, probably because, in the existing disorganization of the kingdom, the possession of the throne by the latter was opposed. Pekahiah reigned in the spirit of his predecessors, but only for two years, as his aide-de-camp (שָׁלִישׁ, see at 2 Sam. xxiii. 8) *Pekah* conspired against him and slew him in the citadel (אַרְמוֹן, see at 1 Kings xvi. 8) of the king's palace, with *Argob* and *Aryeh*. Argob and Aryeh were not fellow-conspirators of Pekah, who helped to slay the king, but *principes Pekachjæ*, as Seb. Schmidt expresses it, probably aides-de-camp of Pekahiah, who were slain by the conspirators when defending their king. We must take the words in this sense on account of what follows: וְעִמּוֹ חֲמִשִּׁים וגו׳, "and with him (Pekah) were fifty men of the Gileadites" (*i.e.* they helped him). The Gileadites probably belonged to the king's body-guard, and were under the command of the aides-de-camp of Pekah.

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[1] It is true that some trace of his expedition has been found in the monuments, since an inscription has been deciphered with tolerable certainty, stating that king *Minikhimmi* of *Samirina* (Menahem of Shomron or Samaria) paid tribute to an Assyrian king. But the name of this Assyrian king is not determined with certainty, as Rawlinson and Oppert read it *Tiglat-palassar*, and suppose Tiglath-pileser to be intended; whereas M. v. Niebuhr (p. 132, note 1) imagines it to be the full name of Pul, since no Assyrian king ever had a name of one syllable like *Pul* as his official name, and even before that Hincks had detected in the name *Minikhimmi* the king Menahem who had to purchase the friendship of the Assyrian ruler Pul with 1000 talents of silver. (Comp. J. Brandis, *über d. histor. Gewinn aus der Entzifferung der assyr. Inschriften*, Berl. 1856, p. 50.)

Vers. 27–31. Reign of Pekah.—Pekah the son of Remaliah reigned twenty years.[1] During his reign the Assyrian king *Tiglath-pileser* came, and after conquering the fortified cities round Lake Merom took possession of Gilead and Galilee, namely the whole land of Naphtali, and led the inhabitants captive to Assyria. Tiglath-pileser (תִּגְלַת פִּלְאֶסֶר or תִּגְלַת פְּלֶסֶר, ch. xvi. 7; תִּלְּגַת פִּלְנְאֶסֶר or תִּלְגַת פִּלְנֶסֶר, 1 Chron. v. 26, and 2 Chron. xxviii. 20; *Θεγλαθφαλασάρ* or *Θαλγαθφελλασάρ*, LXX.; written *Tiglat-pallatsira* or *Tiglat-palatsar* on the Assyrian monuments, and interpreted by Gesenius and others "ruler of the Tigris," although the reading of the name upon the monuments is still uncertain, and the explanation given a very uncertain one, since Tiglat or Tilgat is hardy identical with *Diglath*=Tigris, but is probably a name of the goddess *Derketo, Atergatis*), was, according to M. v. Niebuhr (pp. 156, 157), the last king of the *Derketade* dynasty, who, when the Medes and Babylonians threw off the Assyrian supremacy after the death of Pul, attempted to restore and extend the ancient dominion.[2] His expedition against Israel falls, according to ver. 29 and ch. xvi. 9, in the closing years of Pekah, when Ahaz had come to the throne in Judah. The enumeration of his conquests in the kingdom of Israel commences with the most important cities, probably the leading fortifications. Then follow the districts of which he took possession, and the inhabitants of which he led into captivity. The cities mentioned are *Ijon*, probably the present *Ayun* on the north-eastern edge of the Merj Ayun; *Abel-Beth-Maacah*, the present *Abil el Kamh*, on the north-west of Lake Huleh (see at 1 Kings xv. 20); *Janoach*, which must not be confounded with the *Janocha* mentioned in Josh. xvi. 6, 7, on the border of Ephraim and Manasseh, but is to be sought for in Galilee or the tribe-territory of Naphtali, and has not yet been discovered; *Kedesh*, on the mountains to the west of Lake Huleh, which has been preserved as an insignificant village under the ancient name (see at Josh. xii. 22); *Hazor*, in the same region, but not yet traced with certainty (see at Josh. xi. 1). *Gilead* is the whole of the land to the east of the Jordan, the territory of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half-Manasseh (1 Chron. v. 26), which had only been wrested from the Syrians again a short time before by Jeroboam II., and restored to Israel (ch. xiv. 25, compared with ch. x. 33). הַגָּלִילָה (the feminine form of הַגָּלִיל, see Ewald, § 173, *h*) is more precisely defined by the apposition "all the land of Naphtali" (see at 1 Kings ix. 11).—In the place of אַשּׁוּרָה, "to the land of Assyria," the different regions to which the captives were transported are given in 1 Chron. v. 26. For further remarks on this point see at ch. xvii. 6.—Ver. 30. Pekah met with his death in a conspiracy organized by *Hosea* the son of Elah, who made himself king "in the twentieth year of Jotham." There is something very strange in this chronological datum, as Jotham only reigned sixteen years (ver. 33), and Ahaz began to reign in the seventeenth year of

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[1] As this is apparently at variance not only with ver. 30, according to which Pekah was slain in the twentieth year of Jotham, *i.e.* in the fourth year of Ahaz, but also with ch. xvii. 1, according to which Hosea the murderer of Pekah became king in the twelfth year of Ahaz and reigned nine years, Ewald has added וְתֵשַׁע after עֶשְׂרִים without any hesitation, and lengthened Pekah's reign to twenty-nine years, whereas Thenius proposes to alter twenty into thirty. But we do not thereby obtain an actual agreement either with ver. 30 or with ch. xvii. 1, so that in both these passages Thenius is obliged to make further alterations in the text. For instance, if Pekah had reigned for thirty years from the fifty-second or closing year of Uzziah's reign, Hosea would have ascended the throne in the fourteenth year of Ahaz, supposing that he really became king immediately after the murder of Pekah, and not in the twelfth, as is stated in ch. xvii. 1. It is only with a reign of twenty-eight years and a few months (one year of Uzziah, sixteen of Jotham, and eleven of Ahaz), which might be called twenty-nine years, that the commencement of Hosea's reign could fall in the twelfth year of Ahaz. But the discrepancy with ver. 30, that Hosea conspired against Pekah and slew him in the twentieth year of Jotham, is not removed thereby. For further remarks see at ver. 30 and ch. xvii. 1.

[2] M. Duncker (*Gesch. des Alterthums*, i. pp. 658, 659) also assumes that the dynasty changed with the overthrow of the Derketades, but he places it considerably earlier, about the year 900 or 950 B.C., because on the one hand Niebuhr's reasons for his view cannot be sustained, and on the

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other hand there are distinct indications that the change in the reigning family must have taken place about this time: viz. 1. in the ruins of the southern city of Nineveh, at Kalah, where we find the remains of the palaces of two rulers, who sat upon the throne of Assyria between the years 900 and 830, whereas the castles of Ninos and his descendants must undoubtedly have stood in the northern city, in Nineveh; 2. in the circumstance that from the time mentioned the Assyrian kingdom advanced with fresh warlike strength and in a fresh direction, which would agree with the change in the dynasty.—Which of these two assumptions is the correct one, cannot yet be decided in the present state of the researches on this subject.

Pekah (ch. xvi. 1); so that Pekah's death would fall in the fourth year of Ahaz. The reason for this striking statement can only be found, as Usher has shown (*Chronol. sacr.* p. 80), in the fact that nothing has yet been said about Jotham's successor Ahaz, because the reign of Jotham himself is not mentioned till vers. 32 sqq.[1]

Vers. 32–38. REIGN OF JOTHAM OF JUDAH (cf. 2 Chron. xxvii.). —Ver. 32. "In the second year of Pekah Jotham began to reign." This agrees with the statement in ver. 27, that Pekah became king in the last year of Uzziah, supposing that it occurred at the commencement of the year. Jotham's sixteen years therefore came to a close in the seventeenth year of Pekah's reign (ch. xvi. 1). His reign was like that of his father Uzziah (compare vers. 34, 35 with vers. 3, 4), except, as is added in Chron. ver. 2, that he did not force himself into the temple of the Lord, as Uzziah had done (2 Chron. xxvi. 16).

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[1] Other attempts to solve this difficulty are either arbitrary and precarious, *e.g.* the conjectures of the earlier chronologists quoted by Winer (*R. W. s. v. Jotham*), or forced, like the notion of Vaihinger in Herzog's *Cycl.* (art. *Jotham*), that the words ליותם בן־עזיה are to be eliminated as an interpolation, in which case the datum "in the twentieth year" becomes perfectly enigmatical; and again the assertion of Hitzig (*Comm. z. Jesaj.* pp. 72, 73), that instead of in the twentieth year of Jotham, we should read "in the twentieth year of Ahaz the son of Jotham," which could only be consistently carried out by altering the text of not less than seven passages (viz. ver. 33, ch. xvi. 1, and 2, 17; 2 Chron. xxvii. 1 and 8, and xxviii. 1); and lastly, the assumption of Thenius, that the words from בשנת to עזיה have crept into the text through a double mistake of the copyist and an arbitrary alteration of what had been thus falsely written, which is much too complicated to appear at all credible, even if the reasons which are supposed to render it probable had been more forcible and correct than they really are. For the first reason, viz. that the statement in what year of the contemporaneous ruler a king came to the throne is *always* first given when the history of this king commences, is disproved by ch. i. 17; the second, that the name of the king by the year of whose reign the accession of another is defined is invariably introduced with the epithet king of Judah or king of Israel, is shown by ch. xii. 2 and xvi. 1 to be not in accordance with fact; and the third, that this very king is never described by the introduction of his father's name, as *he is* here, except where the intention is to prevent misunderstanding, as in ch. xiv. 1, 23, or in the case of usurpers without ancestors (ver. 32, xvi. 1 and 15), is also incorrect in its first portion, for in the case of Amaziah in ch. xiv. 23 there was no misunderstanding to prevent, and even in the case of Joash in ch. xiv. 1 the epithet king of Israel would have been quite sufficient to guard against any misunderstanding.

All that is mentioned of his enterprises in the account before us is that he built the upper gate of the house of Jehovah, that is to say, that he restored it, or perhaps added to its beauty. The upper gate, according to Ezek. ix. 2 compared with ch. viii. 3, 5, 14 and 16, is the gate at the north side of the inner or upper court, where all the sacrifices were slaughtered, according to Ezek. xl. 38–43. We also find from 2 Chron. xxvii. 3 sqq. that he built against the wall of *Ophel,* and several cities in the mountains of Judah, and castles and towers in the forests, and subdued the Ammonites, so that they paid him tribute for three years. Jotham carried on with great vigour, therefore, the work which his father had began, to increase the material prosperity of his subjects.—Ver. 37. In those days the Lord began to send against Judah *Rezin,* etc. It is evident from the position of this verse at the close of the account of Jotham, that the incursions of the allied Syrians and Israelites into Judah under the command of *Rezin* and *Pekah* commenced in the closing years of Jotham, so that these foes appeared before Jerusalem at the very beginning of the reign of Ahaz.—It is true that the Syrians had been subjugated by Jeroboam II. (ch. xiv. 28); but in the anarchical condition of the Israelitish kingdom after his death, they had no doubt recovered their independence. They must also have been overcome by the Assyrians under *Pul,* for he could never have marched against Israel without having first of all conquered Syria. But as the power of the Assyrians was greatly weakened for a time by the falling away of the Medes and Babylonians, the Syrians had taken advantage of this weakness to refuse the payment of tribute to Assyria, and had formed an alliance with Pekah of Israel to conquer Judah, and thereby to strengthen their power so as to be able to offer a successful resistance to any attack from the side of the Euphrates.—But as ch. xvi. 6 sqq. and ch. xvii. show, it was otherwise decreed in the counsels of the Lord.

CHAP. XVI. REIGN OF KING AHAZ OF JUDAH.

With the reign of Ahaz a most eventful change took place in the development of the kingdom of Judah. Under the vigorous reigns of Uzziah and Jotham, by whom the earthly prosperity of the kingdom had been studiously advanced, there had been, as we may see from the prophecies of Isaiah, chs. ii.–vi., which date from this time, a prevalence of luxury and self-security, of unrighteousness and forgetfulness of God, among the upper classes, in consequence of the increase of their wealth. Under Ahaz these sins grew into open apostasy from the Lord; for this weak and unprincipled ruler trod in the steps of the kings of Israel, and introduced image-worship and idolatrous practices of every kind, and at length went so far in his ungodliness as to shut up the doors of the porch of the temple and suspend the temple-worship prescribed by the law altogether. The punishment followed this apostasy without delay. The allied Syrians and Israelites completely defeated the Judæans, slew more than a hundred thousand men and led away a much larger number of prisoners, and then advanced to Jerusalem to put an end to the kingdom of Judah by the conquest of the capital. In this distress, instead of seeking help from the Lord, who promised him deliverance through the prophet Isaiah, Ahaz sought help from Tiglath-pileser the king of Assyria, who came and delivered him from the oppression of Rezin and Pekah by the conquest of Damascus, Galilee, and the Israelitish land to the east of the Jordan, but who then oppressed him himself, so that Ahaz was obliged to purchase the friendship of this conqueror by sending him all the treasures of the temple and palace.—In the chapter before us we have first of all the general characteristics of the idolatry of Ahaz (vers. 2–4), then a summary account of his oppression by Rezin and Pekah, and his seeking help from the king of Assyria (vers. 5–9), and lastly a description of the erection of a heathen altar in the court of the temple on the site of the brazen altar of burnt-offering, and of other acts of demolition performed upon the older sacred objects in the temple-court (vers. 10–18). The parallel account in 2 Chron. xxviii. supplies many additions to the facts recorded here.

Vers. 1–4. On the time mentioned, "in the seventeenth year of Pekah Ahaz became king," see at ch. xv. 32. The datum "twenty years old" is a striking one, even if we compare with it ch. xviii. 2. As Ahaz reigned only sixteen years, and at his death his son Hezekiah became king at the age of twenty-five years (ch. xviii. 2), Ahaz must have begotten him in the eleventh year of his age. It is true that in southern lands this is neither impossible nor unknown,[1] but in the case of the kings of Judah it would be without analogy. The reading found in the LXX., Syr., and Arab. at 2 Chron. xxviii. 1, and also in certain codd., viz. five and twenty instead of twenty, may therefore be a preferable one. According to this, Hezekiah, like Ahaz, was born in his father's sixteenth year.—Ver. 3. "Ahaz walked in the way of the kings of Israel," to which there is added by way of explanation in 2 Chron. xxviii. 2, "and also made molten images to the Baals." This refers, primarily, simply to the worship of Jehovah under the image of a calf, which they had invented; for this was the way in which all the kings of Israel walked. At the same time, in ch. viii. 18 the same formula is so used of Joram king of Judah as to include the worship of Baal by the dynasty of Ahab. Consequently in the verse before us also the way of the kings of Israel includes the worship of Baal, which is especially mentioned in the Chronicles.—"He even made his son pass through the fire," *i.e.* offered him in sacrifice to Moloch in the valley of Benhinnom (see at ch. xxiii. 10), after the abominations of the nations, whom Jehovah had cast out before Israel. Instead of בְּנוֹ we have the plural בָּנָיו in 2 Chron. xxviii. 3, and in ver. 16 מַלְכֵי אשור, kings of Asshur, instead of מֶלֶךְ אשור, although only one, viz. Tiglath-pileser, is spoken of. This repeated use of the plural shows very plainly that it is to be understood rhetorically, as expressing the thought in the most general manner, since the number was of less importance than the fact.[1] So far as the fact is concerned, we have here the first instance of an actual Moloch-sacrifice among the Israelites, *i.e.* of one performed by slaying and burning. For although the phrase

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[1] In the East they marry girls of nine or ten years of age to boys of twelve or thirteen (Volney, *Reise*, ii. p. 360). Among the Indians husbands of ten years of age and wives of eight are mentioned (Thevenot, *Reisen*, iii. pp. 100

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and 165). In Abyssinia boys of twelve and even ten years old marry (Rüppell, *Abessynien*, ii. p. 59). Among the Jews in Tiberias, mothers of eleven years of age and fathers of thirteen are not uncommon (Burckh. *Syrien*, p. 570); and Lynch saw a wife there, who to all appearance was a mere child about ten years of age, who had been married two years already. In the *epist. ad N. Carbonelli*, from Hieronymi *epist. ad Vitalem*, 132, and in an ancient *glossa*, Bochart has also cited examples of one boy of ten years and another of nine, *qui nutricem suam gravidavit*, together with several other cases of a similar kind from later writers. Cf. Bocharti *Opp.* i. (*Geogr. sacr.*) p. 920, ed. Lugd. 1692.

[1] The Greeks and Romans also use the plural instead of the singular in their rhetorical style of writing, especially when a father, a mother, or a son is spoken of. Cf. Cic. *de prov. cons.* xiv. 35: *si ad jucundissimos liberos, si ad clarissimum generum redire properaret*, where Julia, the only daughter of Cæsar, and the wife of Pompey the Great, is referred to; and for other examples see Caspari, *der Syr. Ephraimit. Krieg*, p. 41.

הֶעֱבִיר בָּאֵשׁ or לַמֹּלֶךְ does not in itself denote the slaying and burning of the children as Moloch-sacrifices, but primarily affirms nothing more than the simple passing through fire, a kind of februation or baptism of fire (see at Lev. xviii. 21); such passages as Ezek. xvi. 21 and Jer. vii. 31, where sacrificing in the valley of Benhinnom is called slaying and burning the children, show most distinctly that in the verse before us הֶעֱבִיר בָּאֵשׁ is to be taken as signifying actual sacrificing, *i.e.* the burning of the children slain in sacrifice to Moloch, and, as the emphatic וְגַם indicates, that this kind of idolatrous worship, which had never been heard of before in Judah and Israel, was introduced by Ahaz.[1] In the Chronicles, therefore, הֶעֱבִיר is correctly explained by וַיַּבְעֵר, "he burned;" though we cannot infer from this that הֶעֱבִיר is always a mere conjecture for הִבְעִיר, as Geiger does (*Urschrift u. Uebers. der Bibel*, p. 305). The offering of his son for Moloch took place, in all probability, during the severe oppression of Ahaz by the Syrians, and was intended to appease the wrath of the gods, as was done by the king of the Moabites in similar circumstances (ch. iii. 27).—In ver. 4 the idolatry is described in the standing formulæ as sacrificing upon high places and hills, etc., as in 1 Kings xiv. 23. The temple-worship prescribed by the law could easily be continued along with this idolatry, since polytheism did not exclude the worship of Jehovah. It was not till the closing years of his reign that Ahaz went so far as to close the temple-hall, and thereby suspend the temple-worship (2 Chron. xxviii. 24); in any case it was not till after the alterations described in vers. 11 sqq. as having been made in the temple.

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[1] "If this idolatry had occurred among the Israelites before the time of Ahaz, its abominations would certainly not have been passed over by the biblical writers, who so frequently mention other forms of idolatry." These are the correct words of Movers (*Phöniz.* i. p. 65), who only errs in the fact that on the one hand he supposes the origin of human sacrifices in the time of Ahaz to have been inwardly connected with the appearance of the Assyrians, and traces them to the acquaintance of the Israelites with the Assyrian fire-deities *Adrammelech* and *Anammelech* (ch. xvii. 31), and on the other hand gives this explanation of the phrase, "cause to pass through the fire for Moloch," which is used to denote the sacrificing of children: "the burning of children was regarded as a *passage*, whereby, after the separation of the impure and earthly dross of the body, the children attained to union with the deity" (p. 329). To this J. G. Müller has correctly replied (in Herzog's *Cyclop.*): "This mystic, pantheistic, moralizing view of human sacrifices is not the ancient and original view of genuine heathenism. It is no more the view of Hither Asia than the Mexican view (*i.e.* the one which lay at the foundation of the custom of the ancient Mexicans, of passing the new-born boy four times through the fire). The Phœnician myths, which Movers (p. 329) quotes in support of his view, refer to the offering of human sacrifices in worship, and the moral view is a later addition belonging to Hellenism. The sacrifices were rather given to the gods as food, as is evident from innumerable passages (compare the primitive religions of America), and they have no moral aim, but are intended to reward or bribe the gods with costly presents, either because of calamities that have already passed, or because of those that are anticipated with alarm; and, as Movers himself admits (p. 301), to make atonement for ceremonial sins, *i.e.* to follow smaller sacrifices by those of greater value."

Vers. 5-9. Of the war which the allied Syrians and Israelites waged upon Ahaz, only the principal fact is mentioned in ver. 5, namely, that the enemy marched to Jerusalem to war, but were not able to make war upon the city, *i.e.* to conquer it; and in ver. 6 we have a brief notice of the capture of the port of Elath by the Syrians. We find ver. 5 again, with very trifling alterations, in Isa. vii. 1 at the head of the prophecy, in which the prophet promises the king the help of God and predicts that the plans of his enemies will fail. According to this, the allied kings intended to take Judah, to dethrone Ahaz, and to instal a vassal king, viz. the son of Tabeel. We learn still more concerning this war, which had already begun, according to ch. xv. 37, in the closing years of Jotham, from 2 Chron. xxviii. 5-15; namely, that the two kings inflicted great defeats upon Ahaz, and carried off many prisoners and a large amount of booty, but that the Israelites set their prisoners at liberty again, by the direction of the prophet *Oded,* and after feeding and clothing them, sent them back to their brethren. It is now generally admitted that these statements are not at variance with our account (as Ges., Winer, and others maintain), but can be easily reconciled with it, and simply serve to complete it.[1] The only questions in dispute are, whether the two accounts refer to two different campaigns, or merely to two different events in the same campaign, and whether the battles to which the Chronicles allude are to be placed before or after the siege of Jerusalem mentioned in our text. The first question cannot be absolutely decided, since there are no decisive arguments to be found in favour of either the one supposition or the other; and even "the *one* strong argument" which Caspari finds in Isa. vii. 6 against the idea of two campaigns is not conclusive. For if the design which the prophet there attributes to the allied kings, "we will make a breach in Judah," *i.e.* storm his fortresses and his passes and conquer them, does obviously presuppose, that at the time when the enemy spake or thought in this manner, Judah was still standing uninjured and unconquered, and therefore the battles mentioned in 2 Chron. xxviii. 5, 6 cannot yet have been fought; it by no means follows from the connection between Isa. vii. 6 and ver. 1 (of the same chapter) that ver. 6 refers to plans which the enemy had only just formed at the time when Isaiah spoke (ch. vii. 4 sqq.). On the contrary, Isaiah is simply describing the plans which the enemy devised and pursued, and which they had no doubt formed from the very commencement of the war, and now that they were marching against Jerusalem, hoped to attain by the conquest of the capital. All that we can assume as certain is, that the war lasted longer than a year, since the invasion of Judah by these foes had already commenced before the death of Jotham, and that the greater battles (2 Chron. xxviii. 5, 6) were not fought till the time of Ahaz, and it was not till his reign that the enemy advanced to the siege of Jerusalem.—With regard to the second question, it cannot be at all doubtful that the battles mentioned preceded the advance of the enemy to the front of Jerusalem, and therefore our account merely mentions the last and principal event of the war, and that the enemy was compelled to retreat from Jerusalem by the fact that the king of Assyria, Tiglath-pileser, whom Ahaz had called to his help, marched against Syria and compelled Rezin to hurry back to the defence of his kingdom.—It is more difficult to arrange the account of the capture of Elath by the Syrians (ver. 6) among the events of this war. The expression בָּעֵת הַהִיא merely assigns it in a perfectly general manner to the period of the war. The supposition of Thenius, that it did not take place till after the siege of Jerusalem had been relinquished, and that Rezin, after the failure of his attempt to take Jerusalem, that he might not have come altogether in vain, marched away from Jerusalem round the southern point of the Dead Sea and conquered Elath, is impossible, because he would never have left his own kingdom in such a defenceless state to the advancing Assyrians. We must therefore place the taking of Elath by Rezin before his march against Jerusalem, though we still leave it undecided how Rezin conducted the war against Ahaz: whether by advancing along the country to the east of the Jordan, defeating the Judæans there (2 Chron. xxviii. 5), and then pressing forward to Elath and conquering that city, while Pekah made a simultaneous incursion into Judah from the north and smote Ahaz, so that it was not till after the conquest of Elath that Rezin entered the land from the south, and there joined Pekah for a common attack upon Jerusalem, as Caspari supposes; or whether by advancing into Judah along with Pekah at the very outset, and after he had defeated the army of Ahaz in a great battle, sending a detachment of his own army to Idumæa, to wrest that land from Judah and conquer Elath, while he marched with the rest of his forces in combination with Pekah against Jerusalem.—"Rezin brought Elath to Aram and drove the Jews out of Elath, and Aramæans came to Elath and dwelt therein to this day." הֵשִׁיב does not mean "to lead back" here, but literally to turn, to bring to a person; for Elath had never belonged to Aram before this, but was an Edomitish city, so that even if we were to read אֱדוֹם for אֲרָם, הֵשִׁיב could not mean to bring back. But there is no ground whatever for altering לַאֲרָם into לֶאֱדוֹם (Cler., Mich., Ew., Then., and others), whereas the form ארם is at variance with such an alteration through the assumption of an exchange of ר and ד, because אֱדוֹם is never written *defective* אֱדֹם except in Ezek. xxv. 14. There are also no sufficient reasons for altering וַאֲרוּמִים into וַאֲדוֹמִים (*Keri*); אֲרוּמִים is merely a Syriac form for אֲרַמִּים with the dull Syriac *u*-sound, several examples of which form occur in this very chapter,—*e.g.* הַקּוֹמִים for הַקָּמִים ver. 7, דוּמֶשֶׂק for דַּמֶּשֶׂק ver. 10, and אֵילוֹת for אֵילַת ver. 6,—whereas אֱדוֹם, with additions, is only written *plene* twice in the ancient books, and that in the Chronicles, where the *scriptio plena* is generally preferred (2 Chron. xxv. 14 and xxviii. 17), but is always written *defective* (אדמים). Moreover the statement that "אדומים (*Edomites*, not *the* Edomites) came thither," etc., would be very inappropriate, since Edomites certainly lived in this Idumæan city in perfect security, even while it was under Judæan government. And there would be no sense in the expression "the Edomites dwelt there *to this day*," since the Edomites remained in their own land to the time of the captivity.

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[1] Compare C. P. Caspari's article on the Syro-Ephraimitish war in the reigns of Jotham and Ahaz (*Univers. Progr. von Christiania*, 1849), where the different views concerning the relation between the two accounts are fully discussed, and the objections to the credibility of the account given in the Chronicles most conclusively answered.

All this is applicable to *Aramæans* alone. As soon as Rezin had conquered this important seaport town, it was a very natural thing to establish an Aramæan colony there, which obtained possession of the trade of the town, and remained there till the time when the annals of the kings were composed (for it is to this that the expression עַד־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה refers), even after the kingdom of Rezin had long been destroyed by the Assyrians, since Elath and the Aramæans settled there were not affected by that blow.[1] As soon as the Edomites had been released by Rezin from the control of Judah, to which they had been brought back by Amaziah and Uzziah (ch. xiv. 7, 22), they began plundering Judah again (2 Chron. xxviii. 17); and even the Philistines took possession of several cities in the lowland, to avenge themselves for the humiliation they had sustained at the hand of Uzziah (2 Chron. xxviii. 18).—Ver. 7. In this distress Ahaz turned to Tiglath-pileser, without regarding either the word of Isaiah in ch. vii. 4 sqq., which promised salvation, or the prophet's warning against an alliance with Assyria, and by sending the gold and silver which were found in the treasures of the temple and palace, purchased his assistance against Rezin and Pekah. Whether this occurred immediately after the invasion of the land by the allied kings, or not till after they had defeated the Judæan army and advanced against Jerusalem, it is impossible to discover either from this verse or from 2 Chron. xxviii. 16; but probably it was after the first great victory gained by the foe, with which Isa. vii. and viii. agree.—On קוֹמִים for קָמִים see Ewald, § 151, *b*.—Ver. 9. Tiglath-pileser then marched against Damascus, took the city, slew Rezin, and led the inhabitants away to *Kir*, as Amos had prophesied (Amos i. 3–5). קִיר, *Kir*, from which, according to Amos ix. 7, the Aramæans had emigrated to Syria, is no doubt a district by the river *Kur* (*Κῦρος*, *Κύῤῥος*), which taking its rise in Armenia, unites with the Araxes and flows into the Caspian Sea, although from the length of the river Kur it is impossible to define precisely the locality in which they were placed; and the statement of Josephus (*Ant.* ix. 13, 3), that the Damascenes were transported *εἰς τὴν ἄνω Μηδίαν*, is somewhat indefinite, and moreover has hardly been derived from early historical sources (see M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Assurs*, p. 158). Nothing is said here concerning Tiglath-pileser's invasion of the kingdom of Israel, because this has already been mentioned at ch. xv. 29 in the history of Pekah.

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[1] If we only observe that ארומים has not the article, and therefore the words merely indicate the march of an Aramæan colony to Elath, it is evident that אדומים would be unsuitable; for when the יהודים had been driven from the city which the Syrians had conquered, it was certainly not some Edomites but *the* Edomites who took possession again. Hence Winer, Caspari, and others are quite right in deciding that ארומים is the only correct reading.

Vers. 10–18. Ahaz paid Tiglath-pileser a visit in Damascus, "to present to him his thanks and congratulations, and possibly also to prevent a visit from Tiglath-pileser to himself, which would not have been very welcome" (Thenius). The form דּוּמֶּשֶׂק is neither to be altered into דַּמֶּשֶׂק nor regarded as a copyist's error for דַּרְמֶשֶׂק, as we have several words in this chapter that are formed with the dull Syriac *u*-sound. The visit of Ahaz to Damascus is simply mentioned on account of what follows, namely, that Ahaz saw an altar there, which pleased him so much that he sent a picture and model of it "according to all the workmanship thereof," *i.e.* its style of architecture, to Urijah the priest (see Isa. viii. 2), and had an altar made like it for the temple, upon which, on his return to Jerusalem, he ordered all the burnt-offerings, meat-offerings, and drink-offerings to be presented. The allusion here is to the offerings which he commanded to be presented for his prosperous return to Jerusalem.—Vers. 14 sqq. Soon after this Ahaz went still further, and had "the copper altar before Jehovah," *i.e.* the altar of burnt-offering in the midst of the court before the entrance into the Holy Place, removed "from the front of the (temple-) house, from (the spot) between the altar (the new one built by Urijah) and the house of Jehovah (*i.e.* the temple-house), and placed at the north side of the altar." הִקְרִיב does not mean *removit*, caused to be taken away, but *admovit*, and is properly to be connected with עַל־יֶרֶךְ הַמ׳, notwithstanding the fact that וַיִּתֵּן אֹתוֹ is inserted between for the sake of greater clearness, as Maurer has already pointed out.[1] On the use of the article with הַמִּזְבַּח in the construct state, see Ewald, § 290, *d.*—Ver.

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[1] There is nothing in the text to support the view of Thenius, that Urijah had the brazen altar of burnt-offering erected by Solomon moved farther forwards, nearer to the temple-house, and the new one put in its place, whence it was afterwards shifted by Ahaz and the new one moved a little farther to the south, that is to say, that he placed the two altars close to one another, so that they now occupied the centre of the court.

15. He also commanded that the daily morning and evening sacrifice, and the special offerings of the king and the people, should be presented upon the new altar, and thereby put a stop to the use of the Solomonian altar, "about which he would consider." The *Chethîb* וַיְצַוֵּהוּ is not to be altered; the *pron. suff.* stands before the noun, as is frequently the case in the more diffuse popular speech. The new altar is called "the great altar," probably because it was somewhat larger than that of Solomon. הַקְטֵר: used for the burning of the sacrifices. מִנְחַת הָעֶרֶב is not merely the meat-offering offered in the evening, but the whole of the evening sacrifice, consisting of a burnt-offering and a meat-offering, as in 1 Kings xviii. 29, 36. יִהְיֶה־לִּי לְבַקֵּר, the brazen altar "will be to me for deliberation," *i.e.* I will reflect upon it, and then make further arrangements. On בַּקֵּר in this sense see Prov. xx. 25. In the opinion of Ahaz, the altar which had been built after the model of that of Damascus was not to be an idolatrous altar, but an altar of Jehovah. The reason for this arbitrary removal of the altar of Solomon, which had been sanctified by the Lord Himself at the dedication of the temple by fire from heaven, was, in all probability, chiefly that the Damascene altar pleased Ahaz better; and the innovation was a sin against Jehovah, inasmuch as God Himself had prescribed the form for His sanctuary (cf. Ex. xxv. 40, xxvi. 30; 1 Chron. xxviii. 19), so that any altar planned by man and built according to a heathen model was practically the same as an idolatrous altar.—The account of this altar is omitted from the Chronicles; but in ver. 23 we have this statement instead: "Ahaz offered sacrifice to the gods of Damascus, who smote him, saying, The gods of the kings of Aram helped them; I will sacrifice to them that they may help me: and they were the ruin of him and of all Israel." Thenius and Bertheau find in this account an alteration of our account of the copying of the Damascene altar introduced by the chronicler as favouring his design, namely, to give as glaring a description as possible of the ungodliness of Ahaz. But they are mistaken. For even if the notice in the Chronicles had really sprung from this alone, the chronicler would have been able from the standpoint of the Mosaic law to designate the offering of sacrifice upon the altar built after the model of an idolatrous Syrian altar as sacrificing to these gods. But it is a question whether the chronicler had in his mind merely the sacrifices offered

upon that altar in the temple-court, and not rather sacrifices which Ahaz offered upon some *bamah* to the gods of Syria, when he was defeated and oppressed by the Syrians, for the purpose of procuring their assistance. As Ahaz offered his son in sacrifice to Moloch according to ver. 3, he might just as well have offered sacrifice to the gods of the Syrians.—Vers. 17, 18. Ahaz also laid his hand upon the other costly vessels of the court of the temple. He broke off the panels of the Solomonian stands, which were ornamented with artistic carving, and removed the basins from the stands, and took the brazen sea from the brazen oxen upon which they stood, and placed it upon a stone pavement. The וְ before אֶת־הַכִּיֹּר can only have crept into the text through a copyist's error, and the singular must be taken distributively: he removed from them (the stands) every single basin. מַרְצֶפֶת אֲבָנִים (without the article) is not the stone pavement of the court of the temple, but a pedestal made of stones (*βάσις λιθίνη*, LXX.) for the brazen sea. The reason why, or the object with which Ahaz mutilated these sacred vessels, is not given. The opinion expressed by Ewald, Thenius, and others, that Ahaz made a present to Tiglath-pileser with the artistically wrought panels of the stands, the basins, and the oxen of the brazen sea, is not only improbable in itself, since you would naturally suppose that if Ahaz had wished to make a "valuable and very welcome present" to the Assyrian king, he would have chosen some perfect stands with their basins for this purpose, and not merely the panels and basins; but it has not the smallest support in the biblical text,—on the contrary, it has the context against it. For, in the first place, if the objects named had been sent to Tiglath-pileser, this would certainly have been mentioned, as well as the sending of the temple and palace treasures. And, again, the mutilation of these vessels is placed between the erection of the new altar which was constructed after the Damascene model, and other measures which Ahaz adopted as a protection against the king of Assyria (ver. 18). Now if Ahaz, on his return from visiting Tiglath-pileser at Damascus, had thought it necessary to send another valuable present to that king in order to secure his permanent friendship, he would hardly have adopted the measures described in the next verse. — Ver. 18. "The covered Sabbath-stand, which they had built in the house (temple), and the outer entrance of the king he turned (*i.e.* removed) into the house of Jehovah before the king of Assyria." מֵיסַךְ הַשַּׁבָּת (*Keri* מוּסַךְ, from סָכַךְ, to cover) is no doubt a covered place, stand or hall in the court of the temple, to be used by the king whenever he visited the temple with his retinue on the Sabbath or on feast-days; and "the outer entrance of the king" is probably the special ascent into the temple for the king mentioned in 1 Kings x. 5. In what the removal of it consisted it is impossible to determine, from the want of information as to its original character. According to Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 621) and Thenius, הֵסֵב בֵּית יְהוָֹה means, "he altered (these places), *i.e.* he robbed them of their ornaments, in the house of Jehovah." This is quite arbitrary. For even if בֵּית יְהוָֹה could mean "in the house of Jehovah" in this connection, הֵסֵב does not mean to disfigure, and still less "to deprive of ornaments." In ch. xxiii. 34 and xxiv. 17 it signifies to alter the name, not to disfigure it. Again, מִפְּנֵי מֶלֶךְ אַשּׁוּר, "for fear of the king of Assyria," cannot mean, in this connection, "to make presents to the king of Assyria." And with this explanation, which is grammatically impossible, the inference drawn from it, namely, that Ahaz sent the ornaments of the king's stand and king's ascent to the king of Assyria along with the vessels mentioned in ver. 17, also falls to the ground. If the alterations which Ahaz made in the stands and the brazen sea had any close connection with his relation to Tiglath-pileser, which cannot be proved, Ahaz must have been impelled by fear to make them, not that he might send them as presents to him, but that he might hide them from him if he came to Jerusalem, to which 2 Chron. xxviii. 20, 21 seems to refer. It is also perfectly conceivable, as Züllich (*Die Cherubimwagen,* p. 56) conjectures, that Ahaz merely broke off the panels from the stands and removed the oxen from the brazen sea, that he might use these artistic works to decorate some other place, possibly his palace.—Whether these artistic works were restored or not at the time of Hezekiah's reformation or in that of Josiah, we have no accounts to show. All that can be gathered from ch. xxv. 13, 14, Jer. lii. 17, and xxvii. 19, is, that the stands and the brazen sea were still in existence in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, and that on the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldæans they were broken in pieces and carried away to Babylonia as brass. The brazen oxen are also specially mentioned in Jer.

lii. 20, which is not the case in the parallel passage 2 Kings xxv. 13; though this does not warrant the conclusion that they were no longer in existence at that time.—Vers. 19, 20. Conclusion of the reign of Ahaz. According to 2 Chron. xxviii. 27, he was buried in the city of David, but not in the sepulchres of the kings.

CHAP. XVII. REIGN OF HOSHEA AND DESTRUCTION OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL. THE PEOPLE CARRIED AWAY TO ASSYRIA AND MEDIA. TRANSPORTATION OF HEATHEN COLONISTS TO SAMARIA.

Vers. 1–6. Reign of Hoshea King of Israel.—Ver. 1. In the twelfth year of Ahaz began Hoshea to reign. As Hoshea conspired against Pekah, according to ch. xv. 30, in the fourth year of Ahaz, and after murdering him made himself king, whereas according to the verse before us it was not till the twelfth year of Ahaz that he really became king, his possession of the throne must have been contested for eight years. The earlier commentators and almost all the chronologists have therefore justly assumed that there was an eight years' anarchy between the death of Pekah and the commencement of Hoshea's reign. This assumption merits the preference above all the attempts made to remove the discrepancy by alterations of the text, since there is nothing at all surprising in the existence of anarchy at a time when the kingdom was in a state of the greatest inward disturbance and decay. Hoshea reigned nine years, and "did that which was evil in the eyes of Jehovah, though not like the kings of Israel before him" (ver. 2). We are not told in what Hoshea was better than his predecessors, nor can it be determined with any certainty, although the assumption that he allowed his subjects to visit the temple at Jerusalem is a very probable one, inasmuch as, according to 2 Chron. xxx. 10 sqq., Hezekiah invited to the feast of the Passover, held at Jerusalem, the Israelites from Ephraim and Manasseh as far as to Zebulun, and some individuals from these tribes accepted his invitation. But although Hoshea was better than his predecessors, the judgment of destruction burst upon the sinful kingdom and people in his reign, because he had not truly turned to the Lord; a fact which has been frequently repeated in the history of the world, namely, that the last rulers of a decaying kingdom have not been so bad as their forefathers. "God is accustomed to defer the punishment of the elders in the greatness of His long-suffering, to see whether their descendants will come to repentance; but if this be not the case, although they may not be so bad, the anger of God proceeds at length to visit iniquity (cf. Ex. xx. 5)." Seb. Schmidt.—Ver. 3. "Against him came up *Salmanasar* king of Assyria, and Hoshea became subject to him and rendered him tribute" (מִנְחָה, as in 1 Kings v. 1). שַׁלְמַנְאֶסֶר, *Σαλαμανασσάρ* (LXX.), *Salmanasar*, according to the more recent researches respecting Assyria, is not only the same person as the *Shalman* mentioned in Hos. x. 14, but the same as the *Sargon* of Isa. xx. 1, whose name is spelt *Sargina* upon the monuments, and who is described in the inscriptions on his palace at Khorsabad as ruler over many subjugated lands, among which *Samirina* (Samaria ?) also occurs (*vid.* Brandis *üb. d. Gewinn*, pp. 48 sqq. and 53; M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Ass.* pp. 129, 130; and M. Duncker, *Gesch. des Alterth.* i. pp. 687 sqq.). The occasion of this expedition of Salmanasar appears to have been simply the endeavour to continue the conquests of his predecessor Tiglath-pileser. There is no ground whatever for Maurer's assumption, that he had been asked to come to the help of a rival of Hoshea; and the opinion that he came because Hoshea had refused the tribute which had been paid to Assyria from the time of Menahem downwards, is at variance with the fact that in ch. xv. 29 Tiglath-pileser is simply said to have taken a portion of the territory of Israel; but there is no allusion to any payment of tribute or feudal obligation on the part of Pekah. Salmanasar was the first to make king Hoshea subject and tributary. This took place at the commencement of Hoshea's reign, as is evident from the fact that Hoshea paid the tribute for several years, and in the sixth year of his reign refused any further payment.—Ver. 4. The king of Assyria found a conspiracy in Hoshea; for he had sent messengers to *So* the king of Egypt, and did not pay the tribute to the king of Assyria, as year by year. The Egyptian king סוֹא, *So*, possibly to be pronounced סֶוֶה, *Seveh*, is no doubt one of the two *Shebeks* of the twenty-fifth dynasty, belonging to the Ethiopian tribe; but whether he was the second king of this dynasty, *Såbåtåkå* (Brugsch, *hist. d'Egypte*, i. p. 244), the *Sevechus* of Manetho, who is said to have ascended the throne, according to Wilkinson, in the year 728, as Vitringa (*Isa.* ii. p. 318), Gesenius, Ewald, and others suppose, or the first king of this Ethiopian dynasty, *Sabako* the father of Sevechus, which is the opinion of Usher and Marsham, whom M. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch.* pp. 458 sqq. and 463) and M. Duncker (i. p. 693) have followed in recent times, cannot possibly be decided in the present state of Egyptological research.[1]—As soon as Salmanasar received intelligence of the conduct of Hoshea, which is called קֶשֶׁר, conspiracy, as being rebellion against his acknowledged superior, he had him arrested and put into prison in chains, and then overran the whole land, advanced against Samaria and besieged that city for three years, and captured it in the ninth year of Hoshea. These words are not to be understood as signifying that Hoshea had been taken prisoner before the siege of Samaria and thrown into prison, because in that case it is impossible to see how Salmanasar could have obtained possession of his person.[2] We must rather assume, as many commentators have done, from R. Levi ben Gersom down to Maurer and Thenius, that it was not till the conquest of his capital Samaria that Hoshea fell into the hands of the Assyrians and was cast into a prison; so that the explanation to be given of the introduction of this circumstance before the siege and conquest of Samaria must be, that the historian first of all related the eventual result of Hoshea's rebellion against Salmanasar so far as Hoshea himself was concerned, and then proceeded to describe in greater detail the course of the affair in relation to his kingdom and capital. This does not necessitate our giving to the word וַיַּעַצְרֵהוּ the meaning "he assigned him a limit" (Thenius); but we may adhere to the meaning which has been philologically established, namely, arrest or incarcerate (Jer. xxxiii. 1, xxxvi. 5, etc.). וַיַּעַל may be given thus: "he overran, that is to say, the entire land." The three years of the siege of Samaria were not full years, for, according to ch. xviii. 9, 10, it began in the seventh year of Hoshea, and the city was taken in the ninth year, although it is also given there as three years.—Ver. 6. The ninth year of Hoshea corresponds to the sixth year of Hezekiah and the year 722 or 721 B.C., in which the kingdom of the ten tribes was destroyed.

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[1] It is true that M. Duncker says, "Synchronism gives Sabakon, who reigned from 726 to 714;" but he observes in the note at pp. 713 sqq. that the Egyptian chronology has only been firmly established as far back as the commencement of the reign of Psammetichus at the beginning of the year 664 B.C., that the length of the preceding dodekarchy is differently given by Diodorus Sic. and Manetho, and that the date at which Tarakos (Tirhaka), who succeeded Sevechus, ascended the throne is so very differently defined, that it is impossible for the present to come to any certain conclusion on the matter. Compare with this what M. v. Niebuhr (pp. 458 sqq.) adduces in proof of the difficulty of determining the commencement and length of the reign of *Tirhaka*, and the manner in which he proposes to solve the difficulties that arise from this in relation to the synchronism between the Egyptian and the Biblical chronology.

[2] The supposition of the older commentators, that Hoshea fought a battle with Salmanasar before the siege of Samaria, and was taken prisoner in that battle, is not only very improbable, because this would hardly be passed over in our account, but has very little probability in itself. For "it is more probable that Hoshea betook himself to Samaria when threatened by the hostile army, and relied upon the help of the Egyptians, than that he went to meet Salmanasar and fought with him in the open field" (Maurer). There is still less probability in Ewald's view (*Gesch.* iii. p. 611), that "Salmanasar marched with unexpected rapidity against Hoshea, summoned him before him that he might hear his defence, and then, when he came, took him prisoner, and threw him into prison in chains, probably into a prison on the border of the

Ver. 6*b*. *The Israelites carried into exile.*—After the taking of Samaria, Salmanasar led Israel into captivity to Assyria, and assigned to those who were led away dwelling-places in *Chalach* and on the *Chabor*, or the river *Gozan*, and in cities of Media. According to these clear words of the text, the places to which the ten tribes were banished are not to be sought for in Mesopotamia, but in provinces of Assyria and Media. חֲלַח is neither the city of כֶּלַח built by Nimrod (Gen. x. 11), nor the *Cholwan* of *Abulfeda* and the Syriac writers, a city five days' journey to the north of Bagdad, from which the district bordering on the Zagrus probably received the name of *Χαλωνῖτις* or *Καλωνῖτις*, but the province *Καλαχηνή* of Strabo (xi. 8, 4; 14, 12, and xvi. 1, 1), called *Καλακινή* by Ptolemæus (vi. 1), on the eastern side of the Tigris near Adiabene, to the north of Nineveh on the border of Armenia. חָבוֹר is not the כְּבָר in Upper Mesopotamia (Ezek. i. 3, iii. 15, etc.), which flows into the

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land;" to which he adds this explanatory remark: "there is no other way in which we can understand the brief words in ch. xvii. 4 as compared with ch. xviii. 9-11. . . . For if Hoshea had defended himself to the utmost, Salmanasar would not have had him arrested and incarcerated afterwards, but would have put him to death at once, as was the case with the king of Damascus." But Hoshea would certainly not have been so infatuated, after breaking away from Assyria and forming an alliance with *So* of Egypt, as to go at a simple summons from Salmanasar and present himself before him, since he could certainly have expected nothing but death or imprisonment as the result.

Euphrates near *Kirkesion* (*Carchemish*), and is called ܟܒܰܪ (*Chebar*) or ܚܳܒܽܘܪ (*Chabur*) by the Syriac writers, خابور (*Chabûr*) by Abulfeda and Edrisi, *Χαβώρας* by Ptolemæus, *Ἀβόῤῥας* (*Aboras*) by Strabo and others, as Michaelis, Gesenius, Winer, and even Ritter assume; for the epithet "river of *Gozan*" is not decisive in favour of this, since *Gozan* is not necessarily to be identified with the district of *Gauzanitis*, now *Kaushan*, situated between the rivers of *Chaboras* and *Saokoras*, and mentioned in Ptol. v. 18, 4, inasmuch as Strabo (xvi. 1, 1, p. 736) also mentions a province called *Χαζηνή* above Nineveh towards Armenia, between *Calachene* and *Adiabene*. Here in northern Assyria we also find both a mountain called *Χαβώρας*, according to Ptol. vi. 1, on the boundary of Assyria and Media, and the river *Chabor*, called by Yakut in the *Moshtarik* خابور الحسنيه (*Khabur Chasaniæ*), to distinguish it from the Mesopotamian *Chaboras* or *Chebar*. According to Marasz. i. pp. 333 sq., and Yakut, *Mosht.* p. 150, this *Khabur* springs from the mountains of the land of *Zauzan*, زوزان, *i.e.* of the land between the mountains of Armenia, Adserbeidjan, Diarbekr, and Mosul (Marasz. i. p. 522), and is frequently mentioned in Assemani as a tributary of the Tigris. It still bears the ancient name *Khabûr*, taking its rise in the neighbourhood of the upper *Zab* near *Amadîjeh*, and emptying itself into the Tigris a few hours below *Jezirah* (cf. Wichelhaus, pp. 471, 472; Asah. Grant, *Die Nestorianer, v. Preiswerk*, pp. 110 sqq.; and Ritter, *Erdk.* ix. pp. 716 and 1030). This is the river that we are to understand by חָבוֹר. It is a question in dispute, whether the following words נְהַר גּוֹזָן are in apposition to בְּחָבוֹר: "by the Chabor the river of Gozan," or are to be taken by themselves as indicating a peculiar district "by the river *Gozan*." Now, however the absence of the prep. בְּ, and even of the copula וְ, on the one hand, and the words of Yakut, "*Khabur*, a river of *Chasania*," on the other, may seem to favour the former view, we must decide in favour of the latter, for the simple reason that in 1 Chron. v. 26 נְהַר גּוֹזָן is separated from חָבוֹר by וְהָרָא. The absence of the preposition ב or of the copula ו before נְהַר ג׳ in the passage before us may be accounted for from the assumption that the first two names, in *Chalah* and on the *Khabur*, are more closely connected, and also the two which follow, "on the river *Gozan* and in the cities of *Media*."

The river *Gozan* or of *Gozan* is therefore distinct from חָבוֹר (*Khabur*), and to be sought for in the district in which *Γαυζανία*, the city of Media mentioned by Ptol. (vi. 2), was situated. In all probability it is the river which is called *Kisil* (the red) *Ozan* at the present day, the *Mardos* of the Greeks, which takes its rise to the south-east of the Lake *Urumiah* and flows into the Caspian Sea, and which is supposed to have formed the northern boundary of Media.[1] The last locality mentioned agrees with this, viz. "and in the cities of Media," in which Thenius proposes to read הָרֵי, mountains, after the LXX., instead of עָרֵי, cities, though without the least necessity.

Vers. 7–23. *The causes which occasioned this catastrophe.*—To the account of the destruction of the kingdom of the ten tribes, and of the transportation of its inhabitants into exile in Assyria, the prophetic historian appends a review of the causes which led to this termination of the greater portion of the covenant-nation, and finds them in the obstinate apostasy of Israel from the Lord its God, and in its incorrigible adherence to idolatry. Ver. 7. וַיְהִי כִּי, "and it came to pass when" (not because, or that): compare Gen. vi. 1, xxvi. 8, xxvii. 1, xliv. 24, Ex. i. 21, Judg. i. 28, vi. 7, etc. The apodosis does not follow till ver. 18, as vers. 7–17 simply contain a further explanation of Israel's sin. To show the magnitude of the sin, the writer recalls to mind the great benefit conferred in the redemption from Egypt, whereby the Lord had laid His people under strong obligation to adhere faithfully to Him. The words refer to the first commandment (Ex. xx. 2, 3; Deut. v. 6, 7). It is from this that the "fearing of other gods" is taken, whereas מִתַּחַת יַד פַּרְעֹה recall Ex. xviii. 10.—Ver. 8. The apostasy of Israel manifested itself in two directions: 1. in their walking in the statutes of the nations who were cut off from before them, instead of in the statutes of Jehovah, as God had commanded (cf. Lev. xviii. 4, 5, and 26, xx. 22, 23, etc.; and for the formula הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר הוֹרִישׁ וגו׳, which occurs repeatedly in our books—*e.g.* ch. xvi. 3, xxi. 2, and 1 Kings xiv. 24 and xxi. 26—compare Deut. xi. 23 and xviii. 12); and 2. in their walking in the statutes which the kings of Israel had made, *i.e.* the worship of the calves. אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ: it is evident from the parallel passage, ver. 19*b*, that the subject here stands before the relative.—Ver. 9. וַיְחַפְּאוּ דְבָרִים: "they covered words which were not right concerning Jehovah their God," *i.e.* they sought to conceal the true nature of Jehovah by arbitrary perversions of the word of God. This is the explanation correctly given by Hengstenberg (*Dissert.* vol. i. p. 210, transl.); whereas the interpretation proposed by Thenius, "they trifled with things which were not right against Jehovah," is as much at variance with the usage of the language as that of Gesenius (*thes.* p. 505), *perfide egerunt res . . . in Jehovam*, since חִפָּא with עַל simply means to cover over a thing (cf. Isa. iv. 5). This covering of words over Jehovah showed itself in the fact that they built בָּמוֹת (altars on high places), and by worshipping God in ways of their own invention concealed the nature of the revealed God, and made Jehovah like the idols. "In all their cities, from the tower of the watchmen to the fortified city." מִגְדַּל נוֹצְרִים is a tower built for the protection of the flocks in the steppes (2 Chron. xxvi. 10), and is mentioned here as the smallest and most solitary place of human abode in antithesis to the large and fortified city. Such *bamoth* were the houses of high places and altars built for the golden calves at Bethel and Dan, beside which no others are mentioned by name in the history of the kingdom of the ten tribes, which restricts itself to the principal facts, although there certainly must have been others.—Ver. 10. They set up for themselves monuments and *asherim* on every high hill, etc.,—a practice condemned in 1 Kings xiv. 16, 23, as early as the time of Jeroboam. In this description of their idolatry, the historian, however, had in his mind not only the ten tribes, but also Judah, as is evident from ver. 13, "Jehovah testified against Israel *and Judah* through His prophets," and also from ver. 19.—Ver. 11. "And burned incense there upon all the high places, like the nations which Jehovah drove out before them." הִגְלָה, lit. to lead into exile, is applied here to the expulsion and destruction of the Canaanites, with special reference to the banishment of the Israelites.—Ver. 12. They served the clods, *i.e.* worshipped clods or masses of stone as gods (גִּלֻּלִים, see at 1 Kings xv. 12), notwithstanding the command of God in Ex. xx. 3 sqq., xxiii. 13, Lev. xxvi. 1, etc.—Vers. 13 sqq. And the Lord was not satisfied with the prohibitions of the law, but bore witness against the idolatry and image-worship of Israel and Judah through all His prophets, who exhorted them to turn from their evil way and obey His commandments. But it was all in vain; they were stiff-necked like their fathers. Judah is mentioned as well as Israel, although the historian is simply describing the causes of Israel's rejection to indicate beforehand that Judah was already preparing the same fate for itself, as is still more plainly expressed in vers. 19, 20; not, as Thenius supposes, because he is speaking here of that which took place before the division of the kingdom. The *Chethîb* כָּל־נביאו כָל־חֹזֶה is not to be read כָּל־נָבִיא וְכָל־חֹזֶה (Houbig., Then., Ew. § 156, *c*), but after the LXX. כָּל־נְבִיאָו כָּל־חֹזֶה, "through all His prophets, every seer," so that כָּל־חֹזֶה is in apposition to כָּל־נְבִיאָו, and serves to bring out the meaning with greater force, so as to express the idea, "prophets of every kind, that the Lord had sent." This reading is more rhetorical than the other, and is recommended by the fact that in what follows the copula ו is omitted before חֻקּוֹתַי also on rhetorical grounds. וַאֲשֶׁר שָׁלַחְתִּי וגו׳: "and according to what I demanded of you through my servants the prophets." To the law of Moses there was added the divine warning through the prophets. יַקְשׁוּ אֶת־עָרְפָּם has sprung from Deut. x. 16. The stiff-necked fathers are the Israelites in the time of Moses.—Ver. 15. "They followed vanity and became vain:" *verbatim* as in Jer. ii. 5. A description of the worthlessness of their whole life and aim with regard to the most important thing, namely, their relation to God. Whatever man sets before him as the object of his life apart from God is הֶבֶל (cf. Deut. xxxii. 21) and idolatry, and leads to worthlessness, to spiritual and moral corruption (Rom. i. 21). "And (walked) after the nations who surrounded them," *i.e.* the heathen living near them. The concluding words of the verse have the ring of

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[1] The explanation given in the text of the geographical names, receives some confirmation from the Jewish tradition, which describes northern Assyria, and indeed the mountainous region or the district on the border of Assyria and Media towards Armenia, as the place to which the ten tribes were banished (*vid.* Wichelhaus *ut sup.* pp. 474 sqq.). Not only Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 612), but also M. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch. Ass.* p. 159), has decided in favour of this view; the latter with this remark: "According to the present state of the investigations, Chalah and Chabor are no doubt to be sought for on the slope of the Gordyæan mountains in the Kalachene of Strabo, the Kalakine of Ptolemæus, and on the tributary of the Tigris, which is still called Chabur, therefore quite close to Nineveh. The *Yudhi* mountains in this region possibly bear this name with some allusion to the colony." But with reference to the river *Gozan*, Niebuhr is doubtful whether we are to understand by this the *Kisil Ozan* or the waters in the district of Gauzanitis by the Khebar, and gives the preference to the latter as the simpler of the two, though it is difficult to see in what respect it is simpler than the other.

Lev. xviii. 3.—Vers. 16 and 17. The climax of their apostasy: "They made themselves molten images, two (golden) calves" (1 Kings xii. 28), which are called מַסֵּכָה after Ex. xxxii. 4, 8, and Deut. ix. 12, 16, "and Asherah," *i.e.* idols of Astarte (for the fact, see 1 Kings xvi. 33), "and worshipped all the host of heaven (sun, moon, and stars), and served Baal"—in the time of Ahab and his family (1 Kings xvi. 32). The worshipping of all the host of heaven is not specially mentioned in the history of the kingdom of the ten tribes, but occurs first of all in Judah in the time of Manasseh (ch. xxi. 3). The fact that the host of heaven is mentioned between Asherah and Baal shows that the historian refers to the Baal and Astarte worship, and has borrowed the expression from Deut. iv. 19 and xvii. 3, to show the character of this worship, since both Baal and Astarte were deities of a sidereal nature. The first half of ver. 17 rests upon Deut. xviii. 10, where the worship of Moloch is forbidden along with soothsaying and augury. There is no allusion to this worship in the history of the kingdom of the ten tribes, although it certainly existed in the time of Ahab. The second half of ver. 17 also refers to the conduct of Ahab (see at 1 Kings xxi. 20).—Vers. 18 sqq. This conduct excited the anger of God, so that He removed them from His face, and only left the tribe (*i.e.* the kingdom) of Judah (see above, p. 179), although Judah also did not keep the commandments of the Lord and walked in the statutes of Israel, and therefore had deserved rejection. Ver. 19 contains a parenthesis occasioned by רַק שֵׁבֶט וגו' (ver. 18*b*). The statutes of Israel in which Judah walked are not merely the worship of Baal under the Ahab dynasty, so as to refer only to Joram, Ahaziah, and Ahaz (according to ch. viii. 18, 27, and xvi. 3), but also the worship on the high places and worship of idols, which were practised under many of the kings of Judah.—Ver. 20. וַיִּמְאַס is a continuation of וַיִּתְאַנַּף יְהוָה in ver. 18, but so that what follows also refers to the parenthesis in ver. 19. "Then the Lord rejected all the seed of Israel," not merely the ten tribes, but all the nation, and humbled them till He thrust them from His face. מָאַס differs from הִשְׁלִיךְ מִפָּנָיו. The latter denotes driving into exile; the former, simply that kind of rejection which consisted in chastisement and deliverance into the hand of plunderers, that is to say, penal judgments by which the Lord sought to lead Israel and Judah to turn to Him and to His commandments, and to preserve them from being driven among the heathen. נָתַן בְּיַד שֹׁסִים as in Judg. ii. 14.—Ver. 21. כִּי קָרַע וגו׳: "for He (Jehovah) rent Israel from the house of David." This view is apparently more correct than that Israel rent the kingdom from the house of David, not only because it presupposes too harsh an ellipsis to supply אֶת־הַמַּמְלָכָה, but also because we never meet with the thought that Israel rent the kingdom from the house of David, and in 1 Kings xi. 31 it is simply stated that Jehovah rent the kingdom from Solomon; and to this our verse refers, whilst the following words וַיַּמְלִיכוּ וגו׳ recall 1 Kings xii. 20. The כִּי is explanatory: the Lord delivered up His people to the plunderers, for He rent Israel from the house of David as a punishment for the idolatry of Solomon, and the Israelites made Jeroboam king, who turned Israel away from Jehovah, etc. The *Chethîb* וידא is to be read וַיַּדֵּא, the *Hiphil* of נָדָא = נָדָה, "he caused to depart away from the Lord." The *Keri* וַיַּדַּח, *Hiphil* of נָדַח, he drove away, turned from the Lord (cf. Deut. xiii. 11), is not unusual, but it is an unnecessary gloss.—Vers. 22, 23. The sons of Israel (the ten tribes) walked in all the sins of Jeroboam, till the Lord removed them from His face, thrust them out of the land of the Lord, as He had threatened them through all His prophets, namely, from the time of Jeroboam onwards (compare 1 Kings xiv. 15, 16, and also Hos. i. 6, ix. 16, Amos iii. 11, 12, v. 27, Isa. xxviii. etc.). The banishment to Assyria (see ver. 6) lasted "unto this day," *i.e.* till the time when our books were written.[1]

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[1] As the Hebrew עַד, like the German *bis*, is not always used in an exclusive sense, but is frequently abstracted from what lies behind the *terminus ad quem* mentioned, it by no means follows from the words, "the Lord rejected Israel . . . *to this day*," that the ten tribes returned to their own country after the time when our books were written, viz. about the middle of the sixth century B.C. And it is just as impossible to prove the opposite view, which is very widely spread, namely, that they are living as a body in banishment even at the present day. It is well known how often the long-lost ten tribes have been discovered, in the numerous Jewish communities of southern Arabia, in India, more especially in Malabar, in China, Turkistan, and Cashmir, or in Afghanistan (see Ritter's *Erdkunde*, x. p. 246), and even in America itself; and now Dr. Asahel Grant (*Die Nestorianer oder die zehn Stämme*) thinks that he has found them in the independent Nestorians and the Jews living among them; whereas others, such as Witsius (Δεκαφυλ. c. iv. sqq.), J. D. Michaelis (*de exsilio decem tribuum*, comm. iii.), and last of all Robinson in the work quoted by Ritter, *l. c.* p. 245 (*The Nestorians*, etc., New York, 1841), have endeavoured to prove that the ten tribes became partly mixed

Vers. 24–41. THE SAMARITANS AND THEIR WORSHIP.—After the transportation of the Israelites, the king of Assyria brought colonists from different provinces of his kingdom into the cities of Samaria. The king of Assyria is not Salmanasar, for it is evident from ver. 25 that a considerable period intervened between the carrying away of the Israelites and the sending of colonists into the depopulated land. It is true that Salmanasar only is mentioned in what precedes, but the section vers. 24–41 is not so closely connected with the first portion of the chapter, that the same king of Assyria must necessarily be spoken of in both. According to Ezra iv. 2, it was Esarhaddon who removed the heathen settlers to Samaria. It is true that the attempt has been made to reconcile this with the assumption that the king

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up with the Judæans during the Babylonian captivity, and partly attached themselves to the exiles who were led back to Palestine by Zerubbabel and Ezra; that a portion again became broken up at a still later period by mixing with the rest of the Jews, who were scattered throughout all the world after the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, and a further portion a long time ago by conversion to Christianity, so that every attempt to discover the remnants of the ten tribes anywhere must be altogether futile. This view is in general the correct one, though its supporters have mixed up the sound arguments with many that are untenable. For example, the predictions quoted by Ritter (p. 250), probably after Robinson (viz. Jer. l. 4, 5, 17, 19, and Ezek. xxxvii. 11 sqq.), and also the prophetic declarations cited by Witsius (v. §§ 11–14: viz. Isa. xiv. 1, Mic. ii. 12, Jer. iii. 12, xxx. 3, 4, xxxiii. 7, 8), prove very little, because for the most part they refer to Messianic times and are to be understood spiritually. So much, however, may certainly be gathered from the books of Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther, that the Judæans whom Nebuchadnezzar carried away captive were not all placed in the province of Babylonia, but were also dispersed in the different districts that constituted first the Assyrian, then the Chaldæan, and afterwards the Persian empire on the other side of the Euphrates, so that with the cessation of that division which had been so strictly maintained to suit the policy of the Israelitish kings, the ancient separation would also disappear, and their common mournful lot of dispersion among the heathen would of necessity bring about a closer union among all the descendants of Jacob; just as we find that the kings of Persia knew of no difference between Jews and Israelites, and in the time of Xerxes the grand vizier Haman wanted to exterminate all the Jews (not the Judæans merely, but all the Hebrews). Moreover, the edict of Cyrus (Ezra i. 1–4), "who among you of *all* his people," and that of Artaxerxes (Ezra vii. 13), "whoever in my kingdom is willing of the *people of Israel*," gave permission to all the Israelites of the twelve tribes to return to Palestine. And who could maintain with any show of reason, that no one belonging to the ten tribes availed himself of this permission? And though Grant argues, on the other side, that with regard to the 50,000 whom Cyrus sent away to their home it is expressly stated that they were of those "whom of Assyria mentioned in our verse is Salmanasar, by the conjecture that one portion of these colonists was settled there by Salmanasar, another by Esarhaddon; and it has also been assumed that in this expedition Esarhaddon carried away the last remnant of the ten tribes, namely, all who had fled into the mountains and inaccessible corners of the land, and to some extent also in Judæa, during Salmanasar's invasion, and had then collected together in the land again after the Assyrians had withdrawn. But there is not the smallest intimation anywhere of a second transplantation of heathen colonists to Samaria, any more than of a second removal of the remnant of the Israelites who were left behind in the land after the time of Salmanasar. The prediction in Isa. vii. 8, that in sixty-five years more

Nebuchadnezzar had carried away into Babylon" (Ezra ii. 1), with which ch. i. 5 may also be compared, "then rose up the heads of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and Levites, etc.;" these words apply to the majority of those who returned, and undoubtedly prove that the ten tribes as such did not return to Palestine, but they by no means prove that a considerable number of members of the remaining tribes may not have attached themselves to the large number of citizens of the kingdom of Judah who returned. And not only Lightfoot (*Hor. hebr. in Ep.* 1 *ad Cor. Addenda ad c.* 14, *Opp.* ii. p. 929) and Witsius (p. 346), but the Rabbins long before them in *Seder Olam rab.* c. 29, p. 86, have inferred from the fact that the number of persons and families given separately in Ezra ii. only amounts to 30,360, whereas in ver. 64 the total number of persons who returned is said to have been 42,360 heads, besides 7337 men-servants and maid-servants, that this excess above the families of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi, who are mentioned by name, may have come from the ten tribes. Moreover, those who returned did regard themselves as the representatives of the twelve tribes; for at the dedication of the new temple (Ezra vi. 17) they offered "sin-offerings for *all* Israel, *according to the number of the twelve tribes.*" And those who returned with Ezra did the same. As a thanksgiving for their safe return to their fatherland, they offered in sacrifice "*twelve oxen for all Israel*, ninety-six rams, seventy-seven sheep, and *twelve* he-goats for a sin-offering, all as a burnt-offering for Jehovah" (Ezra viii. 35). There is no doubt that the overwhelming majority of those who returned with Zerubbabel and Ezra belonged to the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi; which may be explained very simply from the fact, that as they had been a much shorter time in exile, they had retained a much stronger longing for the home given by the Lord to their fathers than the tribes that were carried away 180 years before. But that they also followed in great numbers at a future time, after those who had returned before had risen to a state of greater ecclesiastical and civil prosperity in their own home, is an inference that must be drawn from the fact that in the time of Christ and His apostles, Galilee, and in part also Peræa, was very densely populated by Israelites; and this population cannot be traced back either to the Jews who returned to Jerusalem and Judæa

Ephraim was to be destroyed, so that it would be no longer a people, even if it referred to the transplantation of the heathen colonists to Samaria by Esarhaddon, as Usher, Hengstenberg, and others suppose, would by no means necessitate the carrying away of the last remnant of the Israelites by this king, but simply the occupation of the land by heathen settlers, with whom the last remains of the Ephraimites intermingled, so that Ephraim ceased to be a people. As long as the land of Israel was merely laid waste and deprived of the greater portion of its Israelitish population, there always remained the possibility that the exiles might one day return to their native land and once more form one people with those who were left behind, and so long might Israel be still regarded as a nation; just as the Judæans, when

under Zerubbabel and Ezra, or to the small number of Israelites who were left behind in the land when the Assyrian deportation took place. On the other hand, even the arguments adduced by Grant in support of his view, viz. (1) that we have not the slightest historical evidence that the ten tribes ever left Assyria again, (2) that on the return from the Babylonian captivity they did not come back with the rest, prove as *argumenta a silentio* but very little, and lose their force still more if the assumptions upon which they are based—namely, that the ten tribes who were transported to Assyria and Media had no intercourse whatever with the Jews who were led away to Babylon, but kept themselves unmixed and quite apart from the Judæans, and that as they did not return with Zerubbabel and Ezra, they did not return to their native land at any later period—are, as we have shown above, untenable. Consequently the further arguments of Grant, (3) that according to Josephus (*Ant.* xi. 5, 2) the ten tribes were still in the land of their captivity in the first century, and according to Jerome (*Comm. on the Prophets*) in the fifth; and (4) that in the present day they are still in the country of the ancient Assyrians, since the Nestorians, both according to their own statement and according to the testimony of the Jews there, are *Beni Yisrael*, and that of the ten tribes, and are also proved to be Israelites by many of the customs and usages which they have preserved (*Die Nestor.* pp. 113 sqq.); prove nothing more than that there may still be descendants of the Israelites who were banished thither among the Jews and Nestorians living in northern Assyria by the Uramiah-lake, and by no means that the Jews living there are the unmixed descendants of the ten tribes. The statements made by the Jews lose all their importance from the fact, that Jews of other lands maintain just the same concerning themselves. And the Mosaic manners and customs of the Nestorians prove nothing more than that they are of Jewish origin. In general, the Israelites and Jews who have come into heathen lands from the time of Salmanasar and Nebuchadnezzar onwards, and have settled there, have become so mixed up with the Jews who were scattered in all quarters of the globe from the time of Alexander the Great, and more especially since the destruction of the Jewish state by the Romans, that the last traces of the old division into tribes have entirely disappeared.

in exile in Babylon, did not cease to be a people, because they looked forward with certain hope to a return to their fatherland after a banishment of seventy years. But after heathen colonists had been transplanted into the land, with whom the remainder of the Israelites who were left in the land became fused, so that there arose a mixed Samaritan people of a predominantly heathen character, it was impossible to speak any longer of a people of Ephraim in the land of Israel. This transplantation of colonists out of Babel, Cutha, etc., into the cities of Samaria might therefore be regarded as the point of time at which the nation of Ephraim was entirely dissolved, without any removal of the last remnant of the Israelites having taken place. We must indeed assume this if the ten tribes were deported to the very last man, and the Samaritans were in their origin a purely heathen people without any admixture of Israelitish blood, as Hengstenberg assumes and has endeavoured to prove. But the very opposite of this is unmistakeably apparent from 2 Chron. xxxiv. 6, 9, according to which there were not a few Israelites left in the depopulated land in the time of Josiah. (Compare Kalkar, *Die Samaritaner ein Mischvolk*, in Pelt's *theol. Mitarbeiten*, iii. 3, pp. 24 sqq.).—We therefore regard Esarhaddon as the Assyrian king who brought the colonists to Samaria. The object to וַיָּבֵא may be supplied from the context, more especially from וַיֹּשֶׁב, which follows. He brought inhabitants from *Babel*, *i.e.* from the country, not the city of Babylon, from *Cuthah*, etc. The situation of *Cuthah* or *Cuth* (ver. 30) cannot be determined with certainty. M. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch.* p. 166) follows Josephus, who speaks of the Cuthæans in *Ant.* ix. 14, 3, and x. 9, 7, as a people dwelling in Persia and Media, and identifies them with the *Kossæans, Kissians, Khushiya, Chuzi,* who lived to the north-east of Susa, in the north-eastern portion of the present Khusistan; whereas Gesenius (*thes.* p. 674), Rosenmüller (*bibl. Althk.* i. 2, p. 29), and J. D. Michaelis (*Supplem. ad Lex. hebr.* p. 1255) have decided in favour of the *Cutha* (كوثا or كوثى) in the Babylonian *Irak*, in the neighbourhood of the *Nahr Malca*, in support of which the fact may also be adduced, that, according to a communication from Spiegel (in the *Auslande*, 1864, No. 46, p. 1089), *Cutha*, a town not mentioned elsewhere, was situated by the wall in the north-east of Babylon, probably on the spot where the hill *Ohaimir* with its ruins stands. The greater number of colonists appear to have come from *Cutha*, because the Samaritans are called כותיים by the Rabbins. עַוָּא, *Avva*, is almost always, and probably with correctness, regarded as being the same place as the עִוָּה (*Ivvah*) mentioned in ch. xviii. 34 and xix. 13, as the conjecture naturally suggests itself to every one that the *Avvæans* removed to Samaria by Esarhaddon were inhabitants of the kingdom of *Avva* destroyed by the Assyrian king, and the form עִוָּה is probably simply connected with the appellative explanation given to the word by the Masoretes. As *Ivvâh* is placed by the side of *Henah* in ch. xviii. 34 and xix. 13, *Avva* can hardly be any other than the country of *Hebeh*, situated on the Euphrates between *Anah* and the *Chabur* (M. v. Niebuhr, p. 167). *Hamath* is *Epiphania* on the Orontes: see at 1 Kings viii. 65 and Num. xiii. 21. *Sepharvaim* is no doubt the *Sippara* (*Σιπφάρα*) of Ptolem. (v. 18, 7), the southernmost city of Mesopotamia on the Euphrates, above the Nahr Malca, the *Ἡλιούπολις ἐν Σιππάροισιν* or *Σιππαρηνῶν πόλις*, which Berosus and Abydenus mention (in Euseb. *Præpar. evang.* ix. 12 and 41, and *Chronic. Armen.* i. pp. 33, 36, 49, 55) as belonging to the time of the flood.—שֹׁמְרוֹן: this is the first time in which the name is evidently applied to the kingdom of Samaria. —Vers. 25–28. In the earliest period of their settlement in the cities of Samaria the new settlers were visited by lions, which may have multiplied greatly during the time that the land was lying waste. The settlers regarded this as a punishment from Jehovah, *i.e.* from the deity of the land, whom they did not worship, and therefore asked the king of Assyria for a priest to teach them the right, *i.e.* the proper, worship of the God of the land; whereupon the king sent them one of the priests who had been carried away, and he took up his abode in Bethel, and instructed the people in the worship of Jehovah. The author of our books also looked upon the lions as sent by Jehovah as a punishment, according to Lev. xxvi. 22, because the new settlers did not fear Him. הָאֲרָיוֹת: *the* lions which had taken up their abode there. וְיֵלְכוּ וְיֵשְׁבוּ שָׁם: that they (the priest with his companions) went away and dwelt there. There is no need therefore to alter the plural into the singular.

The priest sent by the Assyrian king was of course an Israelitish priest of the calves, for he was one of those who had been carried away and settled in Bethel, the chief seat of Jeroboam's image-worship, and he also taught the colonists to fear or worship Jehovah after the manner of the land. This explains the state of divine worship in the land as described in vers. 29 sqq. "Every separate nation (גּוֹי גּוֹי: see Ewald, § 313, *a*) made itself its own gods, and set them up in the houses of the high places (בֵּית הַבָּמוֹת: see at 1 Kings xii. 31, and for the singular בֵּית, Ewald, § 270, *c*) which the Samaritans (הַשֹּׁמְרֹנִים, not the colonists sent thither by Esarhaddon, but the former inhabitants of the kingdom of Israel, who are so called from the capital Samaria) had made (built); every nation in the cities where they dwelt."—Ver. 30. The people of Babel made themselves סֻכּוֹת בְּנוֹת, *daughters' booths.* Selden (*de Diis Syr.* ii. 7), Münter (*Relig. der Babyl.* pp. 74, 75), and others understand by these the temples consecrated to Mylitta or Astarte, the *καμάραι*, or covered little carriages, or tents for prostitution (Herod. i. 199); but Beyer (*Addit. ad Seld.* p. 297) has very properly objected to this, that according to the context the reference is to idols or objects of idolatrous worship, which were set up in the בֵּית בָּמוֹת. It is more natural to suppose that small tent-temples are meant, which were set up as idols in the houses of the high places along with the images which they contained, since according to ch. xxiii. 7 women wove בָּתִּים, little temples, for the Asherah, and Ezekiel speaks of patch-work *Bamoth, i.e.* of small temples made of cloth. It is possible, however, that there is more truth than is generally supposed in the view held by the Rabbins, that סֻכּוֹת בְּנוֹת signifies an image of the "hen," or rather the constellation of "the clucking-hen" (*Gluckhenne*), the Pleiades,—*simulacrum gallinæ cœlestis in signo Tauri nidulantis,* as a *symbolum Veneris cœlestis,* as the other idols are all connected with animal symbolism. In any case the explanation given by Movers, *involucra seu secreta mulierum,* female lingams, which were handed by the hierodulæ to their paramours instead of the Mylitta-money (*Phöniz.* i. p. 596), is to be rejected, because it is at variance with the usage of speech and the context, and because the existence of female lingams has first of all to be proved. For the different views, see Ges. *thes.* p. 952, and Leyrer in Herzog's *Cycl.*—The Cuthæans made themselves as a god, נֵרְגַל, *Nergal, i.e.*, according to Winer, Gesenius, Stuhr, and others, the planet *Mars,* which the Zabians call ܢܝܪܝܓ, *Nerig,* as the god of war (*Codex Nasar.* i. 212, 224), the Arabs مِرّيخ, *Mirrig;* whereas older commentators identified *Nergal* with the sun-god *Bel,* deriving the name from נִיר, light, and גַּל, a fountain = fountain of light (Selden, ii. 8, and Beyer, *Add.* pp. 301 sqq.). But these views are both of them very uncertain. According to the Rabbins (Rashi, R. Salomo, Kimchi), *Nergal* was represented as a cock. This statement, which is ridiculed by Gesenius, Winer, and Thenius, is proved to be correct by the Assyrian monuments, which contain a number of animal deities, and among them the cock standing upon an altar, and also upon a gem a priest praying in front of a cock (see Layard's *Nineveh*). The pugnacious cock is found generally in the ancient ethnical religions in frequent connection with the gods of war (cf. J. G. Müller in Herzog's *Cycl.*). אֲשִׁימָא, *Ashima*, the god of the people of Hamath, was worshipped, according to rabbinical statements, under the figure of a bald he-goat (see Selden, ii. 9). The suggested combination of the name with the Phœnician deity *Esmun*, the Persian *Asuman*, and the Zendic *açmano*, *i.e.* heaven, is very uncertain.—Ver. 31. Of the idols of the *Avvæans*, according to rabbinical accounts in Selden, *l.c.*, *Nibchaz* had the form of a dog (נִבְחַז, *latrator*, from נָבַח), and *Tartak* that of an ass. Gesenius regards Tartak as a demon of the lower regions, because in Pehlwi *tar—thakh* signifies deep darkness or hero of darkness, and Nibchaz as an evil demon, the נבאז of the Zabians, whom Norberg in his *Onomast. cod. Nasar.* p. 100, describes as *horrendus rex infernalis: posito ipsius throno ad telluris, i.e. lucis et caliginis confinium, sed imo acherontis fundo pedibus substrato*, according to *Codex Adami*, ii. 50, lin. 12.—With regard to the gods of the Sepharvites, *Adrammelech* and *Anammelech*, it is evident from the offering of children in sacrifice to them that they were related to Moloch. The name אַדְרַמֶּלֶךְ, which occurs as a personal name in ch. xix. 37 and Isa. xxxvii. 38, has been explained either from the Semitic אדר as meaning "glorious king," or from the Persian اذر, ازر, in which case it means "fire-king," and is supposed to refer to the sun (see Ges. *on Isaiah*, ii. p. 347). עֲנַמֶּלֶךְ is supposed by Hyde (*de relig. vett. Persarum*, p. 131) to be the group of stars called *Cepheus*, which goes by the name of "the shepherd and flock" and "the herd-stars" in the Oriental astrognosis, and in this case ענם might answer to the Arabic غنم = צאן. Movers, on the other hand (*Phöniz.* i. pp. 410, 411), regards them as two names of the same deity, a double-shaped Moloch, and reads the *Chethîb* אלה ספרים as the singular אֵל הַסְּפָרִים, the god of Sepharvaim. This double god, according to his explanation, was a sun-being, because Sepharvaim, of which he was *πολιοῦχος*, is designated by Berosus as a city of the sun. This may be correct; but there is something very precarious in the further assumption, that "*Adar-Melech* is to be regarded as the sun's fire, and indeed, since *Adar* is Mars, that he is so far to be thought of as a destructive being," and that *Anammelech* is a contraction of עין מלך, *oculus Molechi*, signifying the ever-watchful eye of Saturn; according to which *Adrammelech* is to be regarded as the solar Mars, *Anammelech* as the solar Saturn. The explanations given by Hitzig (*on Isa.* p. 437) and Benfey (*die Monatsnamen*, pp. 187, 188) are extremely doubtful.—Ver. 32. In addition to these idols, *Jehovah* also was worshipped in temples of the high places, according to the instructions of the Israelitish priest sent by the king of Assyria. וַיִּהְיוּ יְרֵאִים: "and they were (also) worshipping Jehovah, and made themselves priests of the mass of the people" (מִקְצוֹתָם as in 1 Kings xii. 31). וַיִּהְיוּ עֹשִׂים לָהֶם: "and they (the priests) were preparing them (sacrifices) in the houses of the high places."—Ver. 33 sums up by way of conclusion the description of the various kinds of worship.

Vers. 34–41. This mixed *cultus*, composed of the worship of idols and the worship of Jehovah, they retained till the time when the books of the Kings were written. "Unto this day they do after the former customs." הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים הָרִאשֹׁנִים can only be the religious usages and ordinances which were introduced at the settlement of the new inhabitants, and which are described in vers. 28–33. The prophetic historian observes still further, that "they fear not Jehovah, and do not according to their statutes and their rights, nor according to the law and commandment which the Lord had laid down for the sons of Jacob, to whom He gave the name of Israel" (see 1 Kings xviii. 31), *i.e.* according to the Mosaic law. חֻקֹּתָם and מִשְׁפָּטָם, "*their* statutes and *their* right," stands in antithesis to הַתּוֹרָה וְהַמִּצְוָה which *Jehovah* gave to the children of Israel. If, then, the clause, "they do not according to their statutes and their right," is not to contain a glaring contradiction to the previous assertion, "unto this day they do after their first (former) rights," we must understand by חֻקֹּתָם וּמִשְׁפָּטָם the statutes and the right of the ten tribes, *i.e.* the worship of Jehovah under the symbols of the calves, and must explain the inexactness of the expression "*their* statutes and *their* right" from the fact that the historian was thinking of the Israelites who had been left behind in the land, or of the remnant of the Israelitish population that had become mixed up with the heathen settlers (ch. xxiii. 19, 20; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 6, 9, 33). The meaning of the verse is therefore evidently the following: The inhabitants of Samaria retain to this day the *cultus* composed of the worship of idols and of Jehovah under the form of an image, and do not worship Jehovah either after the manner of the ten tribes or according to the precepts of the Mosaic law. Their worship is an amalgamation of the Jehovah image-worship and of heathen idolatry (cf. ver. 41).—To indicate the character of this worship still more clearly, and hold it up as a complete breach of the covenant and as utter apostasy from Jehovah, the historian describes still more fully, in vers. 35-39, how earnestly and emphatically the people of Israel had been prohibited from worshipping other gods, and urged to worship Jehovah alone, who had redeemed Israel out of Egypt and exalted it into His own nation. For ver. 35 compare Ex. xx. 5; for ver. 36, the exposition of ver. 7, also Ex. xxxii. 11, vi. 6, xx. 23; Deut. iv. 34, v. 15, etc. In ver. 37 the committal of the *thorah* to writing is presupposed. For ver. 39, see Deut. xiii. 5, xxiii. 15, etc.—Ver. 40. They did not hearken, however (the subject is, of course, the ten tribes), but they (the descendants of the Israelites who remained in the land) do after their former manner. מִשְׁפָּטָם הָרִאשֹׁן is their manner of worshipping God, which was a mixture of idolatry and of the image-worship of Jehovah, as in ver. 34.—In ver. 41 this is repeated once more, and the whole of these reflections are brought to a close with the additional statement, that their children and grandchildren do the same to this day.—In the period following the Babylonian captivity the Samaritans relinquished actual idolatry, and by the adoption of the Mosaic book of the law were converted to monotheism. For the later history of the Samaritans, of whom a small handful have been preserved to the present day in the ancient Sichem, the present Nablus, see Theod. Guil. Joh. Juynboll, *commentarii in historiam gentis Samaritanæ*, Lugd. Bat. 1846, 4, and H. Petermann, *Samaria and the Samaritans*, in Herzog's *Cycl.*

III.—HISTORY OF THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH FROM THE DESTRUCTION OF THE KINGDOM OF THE TEN TRIBES TO THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY.

CHAPS. XVIII.-XXV.

At the time when the kingdom of the ten tribes was destroyed, Judah found itself in a state of dependence upon the imperial power of Assyria, into which it had been brought by the ungodly policy of Ahaz. But three years before the expedition of Salmanasar against Samaria, the pious Hezekiah had ascended the throne of his ancestor David in Jerusalem, and had set on foot with strength and zeal the healing of Judah's wounds, by exterminating idolatry and by restoring the legal worship of Jehovah. As Hezekiah was devoted to the Lord his God with undivided heart and trusted firmly in Him, the Lord also acknowledged him and his undertakings. When Sennacherib had overrun Judah with a powerful army after the revolt of Hezekiah, and had summoned the capital to surrender, the Lord heard the prayer of His faithful servant Hezekiah and saved Judah and Jerusalem from the threatening destruction by the miraculous destruction of the forces of the proud Sennacherib (ch. xviii. and xix.), whereby the power of Assyria was so weakened that Judah had no longer much more to fear from it, although it did chastise Manasseh (2 Chron. xxxiii. 11 sqq.). Nevertheless this deliverance, through and in the time of Hezekiah, was merely a postponement of the judgment with which Judah had been threatened by the prophets (Isaiah and Micah), of the destruction of the kingdom and the banishment of its inhabitants. Apostasy from the living God and moral corruption had struck such deep and firm roots in the nation, that the idolatry, outwardly suppressed by Hezekiah, broke out again openly immediately after his death; and that in a still stronger degree, since his son and successor Manasseh not only restored all the abominations of idolatry which his father had rooted out, but even built altars to idols in the courts of the temple of Jehovah, and filled Jerusalem with innocent blood from one end to the other (ch. xxi.), and thereby filled up the measure of sins, so that the Lord had to announce through His prophets to the godless king and people His decree to destroy Jerusalem and cast out the remaining portion of the people of His inheritance among the heathen, and to show the severity of His judgments in the fact that Manasseh was led away captive by the officers of the Assyrian king. And even though Manasseh himself renounced all gross idolatry and restored the legal worship in the temple after his release and return to Jerusalem, as the result of this chastisement, this alteration in the king's mind exerted no lasting influence upon the people generally, and was completely neutralized by his successor Amon, who did not walk in the way of Jehovah, but merely worshipped his father's idols. In this state of things even the God-fearing Josiah, with all the stringency with which he exterminated idolatry, more especially after the discovery of the book of the law, was unable to effect any true change of heart or sincere conversion of the people to their God, and could only wipe out the outward signs and traces of idolatry, and establish the external supremacy of the worship of Jehovah. The people, with their carnal security, imagined that they had done quite enough for God by restoring the outward and legal form of worship, and that they were now quite sure of the divine protection; and did not hearken to the voice of the prophets, who predicted the speedy coming of the judgments of God. Josiah had warded off the bursting forth of these judgments for thirty years, through his humiliation before God and the reforms which he introduced; but towards the end of his reign the Lord began to put away Judah from before His face for the sake of Manasseh's sins, and to reject the city which He had chosen that His name might dwell there (ch. xxii.-xxiii. 27). Necho king of Egypt advanced to extend his sway to the Euphrates and overthrow the Assyrian empire. Josiah marched to meet him, for the purpose of preventing the extension of his power into Syria. A battle was fought at Megiddo, the Judæan army was defeated, Josiah fell in the battle, and with him the last hope of the sinking state (ch. xxiii. 29, 30; 2 Chron. xxxv. 23, 24). In Jerusalem Jehoahaz was made king by the people; but after a reign of three months he was taken prisoner by Necho at Riblah in the land of Hamath, and led away to Egypt, where he died. Eliakim, the elder son of Josiah, was appointed by Necho as Egyptian vassal-king in Jerusalem, under the name of Jehoiakim. He was devoted to idolatry, and through his love of show (Jer. xxii. 13 sqq.) still further ruined the kingdom, which was already exhausted by the tribute to be paid to Egypt. In the fourth year of his reign Pharaoh-Necho succumbed at Carchemish to the Chaldæan power, which was rising under Nebuchadnezzar upon the ruins of the Assyrian kingdom. At the same time Jeremiah proclaimed to the incorrigible nation that the Lord of Sabaoth would deliver Judah with all the surrounding nations into the hand of His servant Nebuchadnezzar, that the land of Judah would be laid waste and the people serve the king of Babylon seventy years (Jer. xxv.). Nebuchadnezzar appeared in Judah immediately afterwards to follow up his victory over Necho, took Jerusalem, made Jehoiakim his subject, and carried away Daniel, with many of the leading young men, to Babylon (ch. xxiv. 1). But after some years Jehoiakim revolted; whereupon Nebuchadnezzar sent fresh troops against Jerusalem to besiege the city, and after defeating Jehoiachin, who had in the meantime followed his father upon the throne, led away into captivity to Babylon, along with the kernel of the nation, nobles, warriors, craftsmen, and smiths, and set upon the throne Mattaniah, the only remaining son of Josiah, under the name of Zedekiah (ch. xxiv. 2–17). But when he also formed an alliance with Pharaoh-Hophra in the ninth year of his reign, and revolted from the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar advanced immediately with all his forces, besieged Jerusalem, and having taken the city and destroyed it, put an end to the kingdom of Judah by slaying Zedekiah and his sons, and carrying away all the people that were left, with the exception of a very small remnant of cultivators of the soil (ch. xxiv. 18–xxv. 26), a hundred and thirty-four years after the destruction of the kingdom of the ten tribes.

CHAP. XVIII. REIGN OF KING HEZEKIAH. SENNACHERIB INVADES JUDAH AND THREATENS JERUSALEM.

Vers. 1–8. *Length and character of Hezekiah's reign.*[1]—Vers. 1, 2. In the third year of Hoshea of Israel, Hezekiah became king over Judah, when he was twenty-five years old. According to vers. 9 and 10, the fourth and sixth years of Hezekiah corresponded to the seventh and ninth of Hoshea; consequently his first year apparently ran parallel to the fourth of Hoshea, so that Josephus (*Ant.* ix. 13, 1) represents him as having ascended the throne in the fourth year of Hoshea's reign. But there is no necessity for this alteration. If we assume that the commencement of his reign took place towards the close of the third year of Hoshea, the fourth and sixth years of his reign coincided for the most part with the sixth and ninth years of Hoshea's reign. The name חִזְקִיָּה or חִזְקִיָּהוּ (vers. 9, 13, etc.) is given in its complete form יְחִזְקִיָּהוּ, "whom Jehovah strengthens," in 2 Chron. xxix. sqq. and Isa. i. 1; and יְחִזְקִיָּה in Hos. i. 1 and Mic. i. 1. On his age when he ascended the throne, see the Comm. on ch. xvi. 2. The name of his mother, אֲבִי, is a strongly contracted form of אֲבִיָּה (2 Chron. xxix. 1).—Vers. 3 sqq. As ruler Hezekiah walked in the footsteps of his ancestor David. He removed the high places and the other objects of idolatrous worship, trusted in Jehovah, and adhered firmly to Him without wavering; therefore the Lord made all his undertakings prosper. הַבָּמוֹת, הַמַּצֵּבוֹת, and הָאֲשֵׁרָה (see at 1 Kings xiv. 23) embrace all the objects of idolatrous worship, which had been introduced into Jerusalem and Judah in the reigns of the former kings,

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[1] On comparing the account of Hezekiah's reign given in our books (ch. xviii.–xx.) with that in 2 Chron. xxix.–xxxii., the different plans of these two historical works are at once apparent. The prophetic author of our books first of all describes quite briefly the character of the king's reign (ch. xviii. 1–8), and then gives an elaborate description of the invasion of Judah by Sennacherib and of his attempt to get Jerusalem into his power, together with the destruction of the proud Assyrian force and Sennacherib's

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hasty return to Nineveh and death (ch. xviii. 13–19, 37); and, finally, he also gives a circumstantial account of Hezekiah's illness and recovery, and also of the arrival of the Babylonian embassy in Jerusalem, and of Hezekiah's conduct on that occasion (ch. xx.). The chronicler, on the other hand, has fixed his chief attention upon the religious reformation carried out by Hezekiah, and therefore first of all describes most elaborately the purification of the temple from all idolatrous abominations, the restoration of the Jehovah-cultus and the feast of passover, to which Hezekiah invited all the people, not only the subjects of his own kingdom, but the remnant of the ten tribes also (2 Chron. xxix.–xxxi.); and then simply gives in ch. xxxii. the most summary account of the attack made by Sennacherib upon Jerusalem and the destruction of his army, of the sickness and recovery of Hezekiah, and of his great riches, the Babylonian embassy being touched upon in only the most casual manner. The historical character of the elaborate accounts given in the Chronicles of Hezekiah's reform of worship and his celebration of the passover, which Thenius follows De Wette and Gramberg in throwing doubt upon, has been most successfully defended by Bertheau as well as others.—On the disputed question, in what year of Hezekiah's reign the solemn passover instituted by him fell, see the thorough discussion of it by C. P. Caspari (*Beitrr. z. Einleit. in d. B. Jesaia*, pp. 109 sqq.), and our Commentary on the Chronicles, which has yet to appear.

and more especially in that of Ahaz. The singular הָאֲשֵׁרָה is used in a collective sense = הָאֲשֵׁרִים (2 Chron. xxxi. 1). The only other idol that is specially mentioned is the brazen serpent which Moses made in the wilderness (Num. xxi. 8, 9), and which the people with their leaning to idolatry had turned in the course of time into an object of idolatrous worship. The words, " to this day were the children of Israel burning incense to it," do not mean that this took place without interruption from the time of Moses down to that of Hezekiah, but simply, that it occurred at intervals, and that the idolatry carried on with this idol lasted till the time of Hezekiah, namely, till this king broke in pieces the brazen serpent, because of the idolatry that was associated with it. For further remarks on the meaning of this symbol, see the Comm. on Num. xxi. 8, 9. The people called (וַיִּקְרָא, one called) this serpent נְחֻשְׁתָּן, *i.e.* a brazen thing. This epithet does not involve anything contemptuous, as the earlier commentators supposed, nor the idea of " Brass-god" (Ewald).—Ver. 5. The verdict, " after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah," refers to Hezekiah's confidence in God (בָּטַח), in which he had no equal, whereas in the case of Josiah his conscientious adherence to the Mosaic law is extolled in the same words (ch. xxiii. 25) ; so that there is no ground for saying that there is a contradiction between our verse and ch. xxiii. 25 (Thenius).—Ver. 6. וַיִּדְבַּק בַּיי׳: he adhered faithfully to Jehovah (דָּבַק as in 1 Kings xi. 2), and departed not from Him, *i.e.* he never gave himself up to idolatry.—Ver. 7. The Lord therefore gave him success in all his undertakings (הִשְׂכִּיל, see at 1 Kings ii. 3), and even in his rebellion against the king of Assyria, whom he no longer served, *i.e.* to whom he paid no more tribute. It was through Ahaz that Judah had been brought into dependence upon Assyria; and Hezekiah released himself from this, by refusing to pay any more tribute, probably after the departure of Salmanasar from Palestine, and possibly not till after the death of that king. Sennacherib therefore made war upon Hezekiah to subjugate Judah to himself again (see vers. 13 sqq.).—Ver. 8. Hezekiah smote the Philistines to Gaza, and their territory from the tower of the watchmen to the fortified city, *i.e.* all the towns from the least to the greatest (see at ch. xvii. 9). He thus chastised these enemies for their invasion of Judah in the time of Ahaz, wrested from them the cities which they had taken at that time (2 Chron.

xxviii. 18), and laid waste all their country to *Gaza*, *i.e.* *Ghuzzeh*, the most southerly of the chief cities of Philistia (see at Josh. xiii. 3). This probably took place after the defeat of Sennacherib (cf. 2 Chron. xxxii. 22, 23).

In vers. 9–12 the destruction of the kingdom of the ten tribes by Salmanasar, which has already been related according to the annals of the kingdom of Israel in ch. xvii. 3–6, is related once more according to the annals of the kingdom of Judah, in which this catastrophe is also introduced as an event that was memorable in relation to all the covenant-nation.

Vers. 13–37. *Sennacherib invades Judah and threatens Jerusalem.*[1]—Sennacherib, סַנְחֵרִיב (*Sanchērībh*), *Σενναχηρίμ* (LXX.), *Σεναχήριβος* (Joseph.), *Σαναχάριβος* (Herodot.), whose name has not yet been deciphered with certainty upon the Assyrian monuments or clearly explained (see J. Brandis *über den histor. Gewinn aus der Entzifferung der assyr. Inschriften*, pp. 103 sqq., and M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Assurs*, p. 37), was the successor of Salmanasar (Sargina according to the monuments). He is called *βασιλεὺς Ἀραβίων τε καὶ Ἀσσυρίων* by Herodotus (ii. 141), and reigned, according to Berosus, eighteen years. He took all the fortified cities in Judah (יְתֻפְּשֵׂם, with the masculine suffix instead of the feminine: cf. Ewald, § 184, *c*). The כֹּל, *all*, is not to be pressed; for, beside the strongly fortified capital Jerusalem, he had not yet taken the fortified cities of Lachish and Libnah (ver. 17 and ch. xix. 8) at the time, when, according to vers. 14 sqq., he sent a division of his army against Jerusalem, and summoned Hezekiah to surrender that city. According to Herodotus (*l.c.*), the real object of his campaign was Egypt, which is also apparent from ch. xix. 24, and is confirmed by Isa. x. 24; for which reason *Tirhaka* marched against him (ch. xix. 8; cf. M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Assurs*, pp. 171, 172).—Vers. 14 sqq. On the report of Sennacherib's approach, Hezekiah made provision at once for the safety of Jerusalem. He had the city fortified more strongly, and the fountain of the upper Gihon and the brook near the city stopped up (see at ver. 17), to cut off the supply of water from the besiegers, as is stated in 2 Chron. xxxii. 2–8, and confirmed by Isa. xxii. 8–11. In the meantime Sennacherib had pressed forward to *Lachish*, *i.e.* *Um Lakis*, in the plain of Judah, on the south-west of Jerusalem, seven hours to the west of *Eleutheropolis* on the road to Egypt (see at Josh. x. 3); so that Hezekiah, having doubts as to the possibility of a successful resistance, sent ambassadors to negotiate with him, and promised to pay him as much tribute as he might demand if he would withdraw. The confession "I have sinned" is not to be pressed, inasmuch as it was forced from Hezekiah by the pressure of distress. Since Asshur had made Judah tributary by faithless conduct on the part of Tiglath-pileser towards Ahaz, there was nothing really wrong in the shaking off of this yoke by the refusal to pay any further tribute. But Hezekiah certainly did wrong, when, after taking the first step, he was alarmed at the disastrous consequences, and sought to purchase once more the peace which he himself had broken by a fresh submission and renewal of the payment of tribute. This false step on the part of the pious king, which arose from a temporary weakness of faith, was nevertheless turned into a blessing through the pride of Sennacherib and the covenant-faithfulness of the Lord towards him and his kingdom. Sennacherib demanded the enormous sum of three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold (more than two and a half million thalers, or £375,000); and Hezekiah not only gave him all the gold and silver found in the treasures of the temple and palace, but had the gold plates with which he had covered the doors and doorposts of the temple (2 Chron. xxix. 3) removed, to send them to the king of Assyria. הָאֹמְנוֹת, lit. the supports, *i.e.* the posts, of the doors.

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[1] We have a parallel and elaborate account of this campaign of Sennacherib and his defeat (ch. xviii. 13–xix. 37), and also of Hezekiah's sickness and recovery and the arrival of the Babylonian embassy in Jerusalem (ch. xx. 1–19), in Isa. xxxvi.–xxxix., and a brief extract, with certain not unimportant supplements, in 2 Chron. xxxii. These three narratives, as is now generally admitted, are drawn independently of one another from a collection of the prophecies of Isaiah, which was received into the annals of the kingdom (2 Chron. xxxii. 32), and serve to confirm and complete one another.

These negotiations with Sennacherib on the part of Hezekiah are passed over both in the book of Isaiah and also in the Chronicles, because they had no further influence upon the future progress of the war.—Vers. 17 sqq. For though Sennacherib did indeed take the money, he did not depart, as he had no doubt promised, but, emboldened still further by this submissiveness, sent a detachment of his army against Jerusalem, and summoned Hezekiah to surrender the capital. "He sent Tartan, Rabsaris, and Rabshakeh." Rabshakeh only is mentioned in Isaiah, as the chief speaker in the negotiations which follow, although in Isa. xxxvii. 6 and 24 allusion is evidently made to the other two. Tartan had no doubt the chief command, since he is not only mentioned first here, but conducted the siege of Ashdod, according to Isa. xx. 1. The three names are probably only official names, or titles of the offices held by the persons mentioned. For רַב־סָרִיס means *princeps cunuchorum*, and רַבְשָׁקֵה chief cup-bearer. תַּרְתָּן is explained by Hitzig on Isa. xx. 1 as derived from the Persian تار تن, *Târ-tan*, "high person or vertex of the body," and in Jer. xxxix. 3 as "body-guard;" but this is hardly correct, as the other two titles are Semitic. These generals took up their station with their army "at the conduit of the upper pool, which ran by the road of the fuller's field," *i.e.* the conduit which flowed from the upper pool—according to 2 Chron. xxxii. 30, the basin of the upper *Gihon* (*Birket el Mamilla*)—into the lower pool (*Birket es Sultân*: see at 1 Kings i. 33). According to Isa. vii. 3, this conduit was in existence as early as the time of Ahaz. The "end" of it is probably the locality in which the conduit began at the upper pool or Gihon, or where it first issued from it. This conduit which led from the upper Gihon into the lower, and which is called in 2 Chron. xxxii. 30 "the outflow of the upper Gihon," Hezekiah stopped up, and conducted the water downwards, *i.e.* underground, towards the west into the city of David; that is to say, he conducted the water of the upper Gihon, which had previously flowed along the western side of the city outside the wall into the lower Gihon and so away down the valley of Ben-hinnom, into the city itself by means of a subterranean channel,[1] that he might retain this water for the use of the city in the event of a siege of Jerusalem, and keep it from the besiegers. This water was probably collected in the cistern (הַבְּרֵכָה) which Hezekiah made, *i.e.* ordered to be constructed (ch. xx. 20), or the reservoir "between the two walls for the waters of the old pool," mentioned in Isa. xxii. 11, *i.e.* most probably the reservoir still existing at some distance to the east of the Joppa gate on the western side of the road which leads to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the so-called "pool of Hezekiah," which the natives call *Birket el Hamman*,

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[1] We may get some idea of the works connected with this aqueduct from the description of the "sealed fountain" of the Solomon's pool at *Ain Saleh* in Tobler, *Topogr. v. Jerus.* ii. pp. 857 sqq., *Dritte Wanderung*.

"Bathing-pool," because it supplies a bath in the neighbourhood, or *B. el Batrak*, "Patriarch's pool" (see Robinson, *Pal.* i. p. 487, and *Fresh Researches into the Topography of Jerusalem*, pp. 111 sqq.), since this is still fed by a conduit from the *Mamilla* pool (see E. G. Schultz, *Jerusalem*, p. 31, and Tobler, *Denkblätter*, pp. 44 sqq.).[1]—Ver. 18. Hezekiah considered it beneath his dignity to negotiate personally with the generals of Sennacherib. He sent three of his leading ministers out to the front of the city: *Eliakim* the son of Hilkiah, the captain of the castle, who had only received the appointment to this office a short time before in *Shebna's* place (Isa. xxii. 20, 21); *Shebna*, who was still secretary of state (סֹפֵר: see at 2 Sam. viii. 17); and *Joach* the son of Asaph, the chancellor (מַזְכִּיר: see at 2 Sam. viii. 16).

Rabshakeh made a speech to these three (vers. 19–25), in which he tried to show that Hezekiah's confidence that he would be able to resist the might of the king of Assyria was perfectly vain, since neither Egypt (ver. 21), nor his God (ver. 22), nor his forces (ver. 23), would be able to defend him.—Ver. 19. "*The great king:*" the Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian kings all assumed this title (cf. Ezek. xxvi. 7; Dan. ii. 37), because kings of conquered lands were subject to them as vassals (see at Isa. x. 8). "What is this confidence that thou cherishest?" *i.e.* how vain or worthless is this confidence!—Ver. 20. "Thou sayest . . . it is only a lip-word . . . : counsel and might for battle;" *i.e.* if thou speakest of counsel and might for battle, that is only דְּבַר שְׂפָתַיִם, a word that merely comes from the lips, not from the heart, the seat of the understanding, *i.e.* a foolish and inconsiderate saying (cf. Prov. xiv. 23; Job xi. 2).—אָמַרְתָּ is to be preferred to the אָמַרְתִּי of Isaiah as the more original of the two. עַתָּה, now, *sc.* we will see on whom thou didst rely, when thou didst rebel against me.—Ver. 21. On Egypt? "that broken reed, which runs into the hand of any one who would lean upon it (thinking it whole), and pierces it through." This figure, which is repeated in Ezek. xxix. 6, 7, is so far suitably chosen, that the Nile, representing Egypt, is rich in reeds. What Rabshakeh says of Egypt here, Isaiah had already earnestly impressed upon his people (Isa. xxx. 3–5), to warn them against trusting in the support of Egypt, from which one party in the nation expected help against Assyria.—Ver. 22. Hezekiah (and Judah) had a stronger ground of confidence in Jehovah his God. Even this

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[1] The identity of the ברכה, which Hezekiah constructed as a reservoir for the overflow of the upper Gihon that was conducted into the city (ch. xx. 20), with the present "pool of Hezekiah" is indeed very probable, but not quite certain. For in very recent times, on digging the foundation for the Evangelical church built on the northern slope of Zion, they lighted upon a large well-preserved arched channel, which was partly cut in the rock, and, where this was not the case, built in level layers and coated within with a hard cement about an inch thick and covered with large stones (Robinson, *New Inquiries as to the Topography of Jerusalem*, p. 113, and *Bibl. Res.* p. 318), and which might possibly be connected with the channel made by Hezekiah to conduct the water of the upper Gihon into the city, although this channel does not open into the pool of Hezekiah, and the walls, some remains of which are still preserved, may belong to a later age. The arguments adduced by Thenius in support of the assumption that the "lower" or "old pool" mentioned in Isa. xxii. 9 and 11 is different from the lower Gihon-pool, and to be sought for in the Tyropœon, are inconclusive. It by no means follows from the expression, "which lies by the road of the fuller's field," *i.e.* by the road which runs past the fuller's field, that there was another upper pool in Jerusalem beside *the* upper pool (Gihon); but this additional clause simply serves to define more precisely the spot by the conduit mentioned where the Assyrian army took its stand; and it by no means follows from the words of Isa. xxii. 11, "a gathering of waters have ye made between the two walls for the waters of the old pool," that this gathering of waters was made in the Tyropœon, and that this "old

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pool," as distinguished from the lower pool (ver. 9), was an upper pool, which was above the king's pool mentioned in Neh. iii. 15. For even if בין החמתים occurs in ch. xxv. 4, Jer. xxxix. 4, lii. 7, in connection with a locality on the south-east side of the city, the Old Testament says nothing about two pools in the Tyropœon at the south-east corner of Jerusalem, but simply mentions a fountain gate, which probably derived its name from the present fountain of the Virgin, and the king's pool, also called *Shelach* in Neh. ii. 14, iii. 15, which was no doubt fed from that fountain like the present *Siloam*, and watered the royal gardens. (Compare Rob. *Pal.* i. pp. 565 sqq., and *Bibl. Res.* p. 189, and Tobler, *Die Siloah-quelle u. der Oelberg*, pp. 1 sqq.). The two walls, between which Hezekiah placed the reservoir, may very well be the northern wall of Zion and the one which surrounded the lower city (Acra) on the north-west, according to which the words in Isa. xxii. 11 would admirably suit the "pool of Hezekiah." Again, Hezekiah did not wait till the departure of Sennacherib before he built this conduit, which is also mentioned in Wisd. xlviii. 17, as Knobel supposes (on Isa. xxii. 11), but he made it when he first invaded Judah, before the appearance of the Assyrian troops in front of Jerusalem, when he made the defensive preparations noticed at ver. 14, as is evident from 2 Chron. xxxii. 3, 4, compared with ver. 30, since the stopping up of the fountain outside the city, to withdraw the water from the Assyrians, is expressly mentioned in vers. 3, 4 among the measures of defence; and in the concluding notices concerning Hezekiah in ch. xx. 20, and 2 Chron. xxxii. 30, there is also a brief allusion to this work, without any precise indication of the time when he had executed it.

Rabshakeh tried to shake, availing himself very skilfully; from his heathen point of view, of the reform which Hezekiah had made in the worship, and representing the abolition of the altars on the high places as an infringement upon the reverence that ought to be shown to God. "And if ye say, We trust in Jehovah our God, (I say:) is it not He whose high places and altars Hezekiah has taken away, and has said to Judah and Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar (in the temple) in Jerusalem?" Instead of כִּי תֹאמְרוּן, according to which Rabshakeh turned to the deputies, we have in Isa. vii. 7 כִּי תֹאמַר, according to which the words are addressed to Hezekiah, as in ver. 20. תֹּאמְרוּן is preferred by Thenius, Knobel, and others, because in what follows Hezekiah is addressed in the third person. But the very circumstance that תֹּאמְרוּן is apparently more suitable favours the originality of תֹּאמַר, according to which the king is still addressed in the person of his ambassadors, and Rabshakeh only speaks directly to the ambassadors when this argument is answered. The attack upon the confidence which the Judæans placed in their God commences with הֲלוֹא הוּא. The opinion of Thenius, that the second clause of the verse is a continuation of the words supposed to be spoken by the Judæans who trusted in God, and that the apodosis does not follow till ver. 23, is quite a mistake. The ambassadors of Hezekiah could not regard the high places and idolatrous altars that had been abolished as altars of Jehovah; and the apodosis could not commence with וְעַתָּה.—Vers. 23, 24. Still less could Hezekiah rely upon his military resources. הִתְעָרֶב נָא: enter, I pray thee, (into contest) with my lord, and I will give thee 2000 horses, if thou canst set the horsemen upon them. The meaning, of course, is not that Hezekiah could not raise 2000 soldiers in all, but that he could not produce so many men who were able to fight as horsemen. "How then wilt thou turn back a single one of the smallest lieutenants of my lord?" הֵשִׁיב אֶת־פְּנֵי פל׳, to repulse a person's face, means generally to turn away a person with his petition (1 Kings ii. 16, 17), here to repulse an assailant. פַּחַת אַחַד is one pasha; although אַחַד, which is grammatically subordinate to פַּחַת, is in the construct state, that the genitives which follow may be connected (for this subordination of אֶחָד see Ewald, § 286, *a*). פֶּחָה (see at 1 Kings x. 15), lit. under-vicegerent, *i.e.* administrator of a province under a satrap, in military states also a subordinate officer. וַתִּבְטַח: and so (with thy military force so small) thou trustest in Egypt לְרֶכֶב וגו׳, so far as war-chariots and horsemen are concerned.—Ver. 25. After Rabshakeh had thus, as he imagined, taken away every ground of confidence from Hezekiah, he added still further, that the Assyrian king himself had also not come without Jehovah, but had been summoned by Him to effect the destruction of Judah. It is possible that some report may have reached his ears of the predictions of the prophets, who had represented the Assyrian invasion as a judgment from the Lord, and these he used for his own purposes. Instead of עַל הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה, against this place, *i.e.* Jerusalem, we have עַל הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת in Isaiah,—a reading which owes its origin simply to the endeavour to bring the two clauses into exact conformity to one another.

Vers. 26–37. It was very conceivable that Rabshakeh's boasting might make an impression upon the people; the ambassadors of Hezekiah therefore interrupted him with the request that he would speak to them in Aramæan, as they understood that language, and not in Jewish, on account of the people who were standing upon the wall. אֲרָמִית was the language spoken in Syria, Babylonia, and probably also in the province of Assyria, and may possibly have been Rabshakeh's mother-tongue, even if the court language of the Assyrian kings was an Aryan dialect. With the close affinity between the Aramæan and the Hebrew, the latter could not be unknown to Rabshakeh, so that he made use of it, just as the Aramæan language was intelligible to the ministers of Hezekiah, whereas the people in Jerusalem understood only יְהוּדִית, Jewish, *i.e.* the Hebrew language spoken in the kingdom of Judah. It is evident from the last clause of the verse that the negotiations were carried on in the neighbourhood of the city wall of Jerusalem. —Ver. 27. But Rabshakeh rejected this proposal with the scornful remark, that his commission was not to speak to Hezekiah and his ambassadors only, but rather to the people upon the wall. The variation of the preposition עַל and אֶל in עַל אֲדֹנֶיךָ, to thy lord (Hezekiah), and אֵלֶיךָ, to thee (Eliakim as chief speaker), is avoided in the text of Isaiah. עַל is frequently used for אֶל, in the later usage of the language, in the sense of *to* or *at.* In the words "who sit upon the wall to eat their dung and drink their urine," Rabshakeh points to the horrors which a siege of Jerusalem would entail upon the inhabitants. For חריהם = חֲרָאֵיהֶם, *excrementa sua,* and שֵׁינֵיהֶם, *urinas suas,* the Masoretes have substituted the euphemisms צוֹאָתָם, going forth, and מֵימֵי רַגְלֵיהֶם, water of their feet.—Vers. 28 sqq. וַיַּעֲמוֹד: not, he stood up, raised himself (Ges.), or came forward (Then.), but he stationed himself, assumed an attitude calculated for effect, and spoke to the people with a loud voice in the Jewish language, telling them to listen to the king of Assyria and not to be led astray by Hezekiah, *i.e.* to be persuaded to defend the city any longer, since neither Hezekiah nor Jehovah could defend them from the might of Sennacherib. אַל־יַשִּׁיא: let not Hezekiah deceive you, *sc.* by pretending to be able to defend or save Jerusalem. In מִיָּדוֹ, " out of his (the Assyrian's) hand," the speaker ceases to speak in the name of his king. On the construction of the passive תִּנָּתֵן with אֶת־הָעִיר, see Ewald, § 277, *d*, although in the instance before us he proposes to expunge the אֵת after Isa. xxxvi. 15.—Vers. 31 sqq. " Make peace with me and come out to me (*sc.* out of your walls, *i.e.* surrender to me), and ye shall eat every one his vine, . . . till I come and bring you into a land like your own land . . ." בְּרָכָה is used here to signify peace as the concentration of weal and blessing. The imperative וְאִכְלוּ expresses the consequence of what goes before (*vid.* Ewald, § 347, *b*). To eat his vine and fig-tree and to drink the water of his well is a figure denoting the quiet and undisturbed enjoyment of the fruits of his own possessions (cf. 1 Kings v. 5). Even in the event of their yielding, the Assyrian would transport the Jewish people into another land, according to the standing custom of Asiatic conquerors in ancient times (for proofs see Hengstenberg, *De rebus Tyriis*, pp. 51, 52). To make the people contented with this thought, the boaster promised that the king of Assyria would carry them into a land which was quite as fruitful and glorious as the land of Canaan. The description of it as a land with corn and new wine, etc., recalls the picture of the land of Canaan in Deut. viii. 8 and xxxiii. 28. זֵית יִצְהָר is the olive-tree which yields good oil, in distinction from the wild olive-tree. וִחְיוּ וגו׳: and ye shall live and not die, *i.e.* no harm shall befall you from me (Thenius). This passage is abridged in Isa. xxxvi. 17.—Vers. 33 sqq. Even Jehovah could not deliver them any more than Hezekiah. As a proof of this, Rabshakeh enumerated a number of cities and lands which the king of Assyria had conquered, without their gods' being able to offer any resistance to his power. " Where are the gods of Hamath, etc., that they might have delivered Samaria out of my hand?" Instead of כִּי הִצִּילוּ we have וְכִי הצ׳,

and that they might have, which loosens the connection somewhat more between this clause and the preceding one, and makes it more independent. "Where are they?" is equivalent to they are gone, have perished (cf. ch. xix. 18); and "that they might have delivered" is equivalent to they have not delivered. The subject to כִּי הִצִּילוּ is אֱלֹהֵי הַגּוֹיִם, which includes the God of Samaria. Sennacherib regards himself as being as it were one with his predecessors, as the representative of the might of Assyria, so that he attributes to himself the conquests of cities and lands which his ancestors had made. The cities and lands enumerated in ver. 34 have been mentioned already in ch. xvii. 24 as conquered territories, from which colonists had been transplanted to Samaria, with the exception of *Arpad* and *Hena*. אַרְפָּד, which is also mentioned in ch. xix. 13, Isa. x. 9, xxxvi. 19, xxxvii. 13, and Jer. xlix. 23, in connection with *Hamath*, was certainly situated in the neighbourhood of that city, and still exists, so far as the name is concerned, in the large village of ارفاد, *Arfâd* (mentioned by Maraszid, i. 47), in northern Syria in the district of *Azâz*, which was seven hours to the north of Haleb, according to Abulf. *Tab. Syr. ed. Köhler*, p. 23, and Niebuhr, *Reise*, ii. p. 414 (see Roediger, *Addenda ad Ges. thes.* p. 112). הֵנַע, *Hena*, which is also combined with *'Ivvah* in ch. xix. 13 and Isa. xxxvii. 13, is probably the city of عانة, *Ana*, on the Euphrates, mentioned by Abulf., and עִוָּה is most likely the same as עַוָּא in ch. xvii. 24. The names הֵנַע וְעִוָּה are omitted from the text of Isaiah in consequence of the abridgment of Rabshakeh's address.—Ver. 35 contains the conclusion drawn from the facts already adduced: "which of all the gods of the lands are they who have delivered their land out of my hand, that Jehovah should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?" *i.e.* as not one of the gods of the lands named have been able to rescue his land from Assyria, Jehovah also will not be able to defend Jerusalem.—Vers. 36, 37. The people were quite silent at this address ("the people," הָעָם, to whom Rabshakeh had wished to address himself); for Hezekiah had forbidden them to make any answer, not only to prevent Rabshakeh from saying anything further, but that the ambassadors of Sennacherib might be left in complete uncertainty as to the impression made by their words. The deputies of Hezekiah returned to the king with their clothes rent as a sign of grief at the words of the Assyrian, by which not only Hezekiah, but still more Jehovah, had been blasphemed, and reported what they had heard.

CHAP. XIX. JERUSALEM DELIVERED. DESTRUCTION OF THE ASSYRIAN ARMY AND DEATH OF SENNACHERIB. (Compare Isa. xxxvii.)

Vers. 1–4. When Hezekiah had heard from his counsellors the report of Rabshakeh's words, he rent his clothes with horror at his daring mockery of the living God (ver. 4), put on mourning clothes as a sign of the trouble of his soul and went into the temple, and at the same time sent Eliakim and Shebna with the oldest of the priests in mourning costume to the prophet Isaiah, to entreat him to intercede with the Lord in these desperate circumstances.[1] The order of the words: Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, is unusual (cf. ch. xiv. 25, xx. 1; 1 Kings xvi. 7, etc.), and is therefore altered in Isaiah into Isaiah the son of Amoz, the prophet.—Ver. 3. "A day of distress, and of chastisement, and of rejection is this day." תּוֹכֵחָה: the divine chastisement. נְאָצָה: contemptuous treatment, or rejection of the people on the part of God (compare נִאֵץ, Deut. xxxii. 19, Jer. xiv. 21, Lam. ii. 6). "For children have come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth." A figure denoting extreme danger, the most desperate circumstances. If the woman in travail has not strength to bring forth the child which has come to the mouth of the womb, both the life of the child and that of the mother are exposed to the greatest danger; and this was the condition of the people here (see the similar figure in Hos. xiii. 13). For לֵדָה instead of לֶדֶת, see Ges. § 69, 2 Anm.—Ver. 4. Perhaps Jehovah thy God will hear the blasphemies of the living God on the part of Rabshakeh. יִשְׁמַע: hear, equivalent to observe, take notice of, and in this case punish. אֱלֹהִים חַי: the living God, in contrast to the gods of the heathen, who are only lifeless idols (cf. 1 Sam. xvii. 26, 36). וְהוֹכִיחַ is not to be taken in connection with לְחָרֵף, as if it stood for לְהוֹכִיחַ, "and to scold with words" (Luth.,

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[1] "But the most wise king did not meet his blasphemies with weapons, but with prayer, and tears, and sackcloth, and entreated the prophet Isaiah to be his ambassador."—THEODORET.

Ges., etc.), but is a *perf. rel.* or a progressive perfect (Ewald, § 234, *a*), and the continuation of יִשְׁמַע: "and will chastise (punish, *sc.* him) for the words which He has heard." וְנָשָׂאתָ תפ׳: "therefore lift up prayer (to heaven) for the (still) existing remnant, *sc.* of the people of God;" nearly all Judah having come into the power of Sennacherib since the carrying away of the ten tribes.

Vers. 5–7. Isaiah replied with this comforting promise: Hezekiah was not to be afraid of the blasphemous words of the Assyrian king; the Lord would frighten him with a report, so that he would return to his own land, and there would He cause him to fall by the sword. נַעֲרֵי מֶלֶךְ א׳, the servants or young men of the Assyrian king, is a derogatory epithet applied to the officials of Assyria. "Behold, I put a spirit into him, so that he shall hear a report and return into his own land." שְׁמוּעָה does not refer to the report of the destruction of his army (ver. 35), as Thenius supposes, for Sennacherib did not hear of this through the medium of an army, but was with the army himself at the time when it was smitten by the angel of the Lord; it refers to the report mentioned in ver. 9. For even if he made one last attempt to secure the surrender of Jerusalem immediately upon hearing this report, yet after the failure of this attempt to shake the firmness of Hezekiah his courage must have failed him, and the thought of return must have suggested itself, so that this was only accelerated by the blow which fell upon the army. For, as O. v. Gerlach has correctly observed, "the destruction of the army would hardly have produced any decisive effect without the approach of Tirhakah, since the great power of the Assyrian king, especially in relation to the small kingdom of Judah, was not broken thereby. But at the prayer of the king the Lord added this miracle to the other, which His providence had already brought to pass.—For the fulfilment of the prophecy of Sennacherib's death, see ver. 37.

Vers. 8–13. In the meantime Rabshakeh had returned to his king at *Libnah* (see at ch. viii. 22), to which he had gone from Lachish, probably after having taken that fortress.—Ver. 9. There Sennacherib heard that Tirhakah was advancing to make war against him. *Tirhakah, Θαρακά* (LXX.), king of Cush, is the *Ταρακός* of Manetho, the successor of Sevechus (Shebek II.), the third king of the twenty-fifth (Ethiopian) dynasty, described by Strabo (xv. 687), who calls him *Τεύρκων*, as a great conqueror. His name is spelt *Tåhålqa* or *Tåharqô* upon the monuments, and on the Pylon of the great temple at Medinet-Abu he is represented in the form of a king, cutting down enemies of conquered lands (Egypt, Syria, and *Tepopå*, an unknown land) before the god Ammon (see Brugsch, *hist. d'Egypte*, i. pp. 244, 245).[1]—On hearing the report of the advance of Tirhakah, Sennacherib sent ambassadors again to Hezekiah with a letter (ver. 14), in which he summoned him once more to give up his confidence in his God, and his assurance that Jerusalem would not be delivered into the hands of the king of Assyria, since the gods of no other nation had been able to save their lands and cities from the kings of Assyria who had preceded him. The letter contained nothing more, therefore, than a repetition of the arguments already adduced by Rabshakeh (ch. xviii. 19 sqq.), though a larger number of the lands conquered by the Assyrians are given, for the purpose of strengthening the impression intended to be made upon Hezekiah of the irresistible character of the Assyrian arms.—To offer a successful resistance to Tirhakah and overcome him, Sennacherib wanted above all things a firm footing in Judah; and for this the possession of Jerusalem was of the greatest importance, since it would both cover his back and secure his retreat. Fortifications like Lachish and Libnah could be quickly taken by a violent assault. But it was very different with Jerusalem. Salmanasar had stood before Samaria for three years before he was able to conquer it; and Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem for two years before the city was starved out and it was possible to take it (ch. xxv. 1 sqq.). But as Tirhakah was approaching, Sennacherib had no time now for so tedious a siege. He therefore endeavoured to induce Hezekiah to surrender the city quietly by a boastful description of his own power. Instead of וַיָּשָׁב וַיִּשְׁלַח (ver. 9), we have in Isaiah וַיִּשְׁמַע וַיִּשְׁלַח, "when he heard this he sent," which is probably the more original, and indicates that when Sennacherib received the intelligence he sent at once (Drechsler). —Ver. 10. אַל יַשִּׁאֲךָ: "let not thy God deceive thee," *i.e.* do not allow yourself to be deceived by your confidence in your God. לֵאמֹר, to say, *i.e.* to think or believe, that Jerusalem will not be given, etc. To shatter this confidence, Sennacherib reminds him of the deeds of the Assyrian kings. לְהַחֲרִימָם, to ban them, *i.e.* by smiting them with the ban. The verb הֶחֱרִים is chosen with emphasis, to express the unsparing destruction. וְאַתָּה תִּנָּצֵל: and thou shouldst be saved?—a question implying a strong negative.—Ver. 12. "Have the gods of the nations delivered them?" אֹתָם is not a pronoun used in anticipation of the object, which follows in גּוֹזָן וגו׳ (Thenius), but refers to כָּל־הָאֲרָצוֹת in ver. 11, a specification of which is given in the following enumeration. *Gozan* may be the province of *Gauzanitis* in Mesopotamia, but it may just as well be the country of *Gauzania* on the other side of the Tigris (see at ch. xvii. 6). The combination with *Haran* does not force us to the first assumption, since the list is not a geographical but a historical one.—*Haran* (*Charan*), *i.e.* the *Carræ* of the Greeks and Romans, where Abraham's father Terah died, a place in northern Mesopotamia (see at Gen. xi. 31), is probably not merely the city here, but the country in which the city stood.—*Rezeph* (רֶצֶף), the Arabic رُصَافَة, a very widespread name, since Jakut gives nine cities of this name in his Geographical Lexicon, is probably the most celebrated of the cities of that name, the *Rusapha* of Syria, called Ῥησάφα in Ptol. v. 15, in Palmyrene, on the road from Racca to Emesa, a day's journey from the Euphrates (cf. Ges. *Thes.* p. 1308).—"The sons of *Eden*, which (were) in *Telassar*," were evidently a tribe whose chief settlement was in Telassar. By עֶדֶן we might understand the בֵּית־עֶדֶן of Amos i. 5, a city in a pleasant region of Syria, called *Παράδεισος* by Ptol. (v. 15), since there is still a village called *Ehden* in that locality (cf. Burckhardt, *Syr.* p. 66, and v. Schubert, *Reise,* iii. p. 366), if we could only discover *Telassar* in the neighbourhood, and if the village of Ehden could be identified with *Παράδεισος* and the *Eden* of the Bible, as is done even by Gesenius on Burckhardt, p. 492, and *Thes.* p. 195; but this *Ehden* is spelt اهدن in Arabic, and is not to be associated with עֵדֶן (see Rob. *Bibl. Res.* pp. 586, 587). Moreover the *Thelseæ* near Damascus (in the *Itin. Ant.* p. 196, ed. Wess.) is too unlike *Telassar* to come into consideration. There is more to be said in favour of the identification of our עֵדֶן with the Assyrian *Eden,* which is mentioned in Ezek. xxvii. 23 along with *Haran* and *Calneh* as an important place for trade, although its position cannot be more certainly defined; and neither the comparison with the tract of land called ܡܥܕܢ, *Maadon,* which Assemani (*Biblioth. or.* ii. p. 224) places in Mesopotamia, towards the Tigris, in the present province of Diarbekr (Ges., Win.), nor the conjecture of Knobel that the tribe-name *Eden* may very probably have been preserved in the large but very dilapidated village of *Adana* or *Adna,* some distance to the north of Bagdad (Ker Porter, *Journey,* ii. p. 355, and Ritter, *Erdk.* ix. p. 493), can be established as even a probability. תְּלַאשָּׂר, *Telassar,* is also quite unknown. The name applies very well to *Thelser* on the eastern side of the Tigris (*Tab. Peut.* xi. *e*), where even the later Targums on Gen. x. 12 have placed it, interpreting Nimrod's *Resen* by תְּלַסַּר, תְּלַאסָּר, though Knobel opposes this on the ground that a place in Assyria proper is unsuitable in such a passage as this, where the Assyrian feats of war outside Assyria itself are enumerated. Movers (*Phöniz.* ii. 3, p. 251) conjectures that the place referred to is *Thelassar* in *Terodon,* a leading emporium for Arabian wares on the Persian Gulf, and supposes that *Terodon* has sprung from *Teledon* with the Persian pronunciation of the תֵּל, which is very frequent in the names of Mesopotamian cities. This conjecture is at any rate a more natural one than that of Knobel on Isa. xxxvii. 12, that the place mentioned in Assemani (*Bib. or.* iii. 2, p. 870), تل بصرصر, *Tel* on the *Szarszar,* to the west of the present Bagdad, is intended.—With regard to the places named in ver. 13, see at ch. xviii. 34.

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[1] According to Jul. Afric. (in Syncell. i. p. 139, ed. Dind.) he reigned eighteen years, according to Euseb. (in Syncell. p. 140) twenty years. Both statements are incorrect; for, according to an Apis-stele published by Mariette, the birth of an Apis who died in the twentieth year of Psammetichus fell in the twenty-sixth year of Tirhakah, so that the reign of Tirhakah may be supposed to have lasted twenty-eight years (see Brugsch, *l.c.* p. 247). But the chronological conclusions respecting the date of his reign are very uncertain. Whereas M. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch. Ass.* p. 72) fixes his expedition against Sennacherib in the thirty-seventh *ær. Nab.*, *i.e.* 710 B.C., and the commencement of his reign over Egypt in 45 *ær. Nab.*, *i.e.* 702 B.C., and assumes that he marched against Sennacherib before he was king of Egypt, which is apparently favoured by the epithet king of Cush, not of Egypt; Brugsch (*l.c.* p. 292) has given the year 693 B.C. as the commencement of his reign. It is obvious that this statement is irreconcilable with the O. T. chronology, since the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, in which Sennacherib invaded Judah, corresponds to the year 714 or 713 B.C. These diversities simply confirm our remark (p. 411), that the chronological data as to the kings of Egypt before Psammetichus cannot lay any claim to historical certainty. For an attempt to solve this discrepancy see M. v. Niebuhr, pp. 458 sqq.

Vers. 14–19. *Hezekiah's prayer.*—Ver. 14. Hezekiah took the letter, read it, went into the temple and spread it out before Jehovah, to lay open its contents before God. The contents of the letter are given in vers. 10–13 in the form of the message which the ambassadors delivered to Hezekiah from their king, because the ambassadors communicated to Hezekiah by word of mouth the essential contents of the writing which they conveyed, and simply handed him the letter as a confirmation of their words. סְפָרִים, like *litteræ,* means a letter; hence the singular suffix attached to וַיִּפְרְשֵׂהוּ, whereas in the case of וַיִּקְרָאֵם, which stands nearer, the suffix follows the number of the noun to which it refers. The spreading out of the letter before God was an embodiment of the wish, which sprang from a child-like and believing trust, that the Lord would notice and punish that defiance of the living God which it contained. What Hezekiah meant by this action he expressed in the following prayer.—Ver. 15. In opposition to the delusion of the Assyrians, he describes Jehovah, the God of Israel, as the only God of all the kingdoms of the earth, since He was the Creator of heaven and earth. יֹשֵׁב הַכְּרֻבִים (see at 1 Sam. iv. 4 and Ex. xxv. 22) indicates the covenant-relation into which Jehovah, the almighty Creator and Ruler of the whole world, had entered towards Israel. As the covenant God who was enthroned above the cherubim the Lord was bound to help His people, if they turned to Him with faith in the time of their distress and entreated His assistance; and as the only God of all the world He had the power to help. In Isaiah, צְבָאוֹת, which is very rare in historical prose, but very common in prophetical addresses, is added to the name יְהוָֹה, and thus Jehovah at the very outset is addressed as the God of the universe. On the meaning of צְבָאוֹת, see at 1 Sam. i. 3. On אַתָּה הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים, see 2 Sam. vii. 28 and 1 Kings xviii. 39.—Ver. 16. The accumulation of the words, "bow down Thine ear, Jehovah, and hear; open, Jehovah, Thine eyes and see, and hear the words," etc., indicates the earnestness and importunity of the prayer. The plural עֵינֶיךָ by the side of the singular אָזְנְךָ is the correct reading, since the expression "to incline the ear" is constantly met with (Ps. xvii. 6, xxxi. 3, xlv. 11, etc.); and even in the plural, "incline ye your ear" (Ps. lxxviii. 1; Isa. lv. 3), and on the other hand "to open the eyes" (Job xxvii. 19; Prov. xx. 13; Zech. xii. 4; Dan. ix. 18), because a man always opens both eyes to see anything, whereas he turns one ear to a person speaking. The עֵינֶךָ of Isaiah is also plural, though written defectively, as the Masora has already observed. The suffix in שְׁלָחוֹ, which is wanting in Isaiah, belongs to אֲשֶׁר, and refers with this to דִּבְרֵי in the sense of speech: the speech which Sennacherib had made in his letter.—Vers. 17, 18. After the challenge, to observe the blasphemies of Sennacherib, Hezekiah mentions the fact that the Assyrians have really devastated all lands, and therefore that it is not without ground that they boast of their mighty power; but he finds the explanation of this in the impotence and nothingness of the gods of the heathen. אָמְנָם, truly, indeed —the kings of Asshur have devastated the nations and their land. Instead of this we find in Isaiah: "they have devastated all lands and their (own) land"—which is evidently the more difficult and also the more original reading, and has been altered in our account, because the thought that the Assyrians had devastated their own land by making war upon other lands, that is to say, had depopulated it and thereby laid it waste, was not easy to understand. "And have cast their gods into the fire, for they are not gods, but works of human hands, wood and stone, and have thus destroyed them." Hezekiah does not mention this as a sign of the recklessness of the Assyrians (Knobel), but, because Sennacherib had boasted that the gods of no nation had been able to resist him (vers. 12, 13), to put this fact in the right light, and attach thereto the prayer that Jehovah, by granting deliverance, would make known to all the kingdoms of the earth that He alone was God. Instead of וְנָתְנוּ we have in Isaiah וְנָתוֹן, the inf. absol.; in this connection the more difficult and more genuine reading. This also applies to the omission of אֱלֹהִים (ver. 19*b*) in Isa. xxxvii. 20, since the use of *Jehovah* as a predicate, "that Thou alone art Jehovah," is very rare, and has therefore been misunderstood even by Gesenius. By the introduction of *Elohim*, the thought "that Thou Jehovah art God alone" is simplified.

Vers. 20–34. *The divine promise.*—Vers. 20, 21. When Hezekiah had prayed, the prophet Isaiah received a divine revelation with regard to the hearing of this prayer, which he sent, *i.e.* caused to be handed over, to the king. שָׁמַעְתִּי (ver. 21) is omitted in Isaiah, so that אֲשֶׁר הִתְפַּלַּלְתָּ וגו׳ is to be taken in the sense of "with regard to that which thou hast prayed to me," whilst שָׁמַעְתִּי (I have heard) elucidates the thought and simplifies the construction. The word of the Lord announced to the king, (1) the shameful retreat of Sennacherib as a just retribution for his mockery of the living God (vers. 21–28; Isa. xxxvii. 22–29); (2) the confirmation of this assurance through the indication of a sign by which Hezekiah was to recognise the deliverance of Jerusalem (vers. 29–31; Isa. xxxvii. 30–32), and through the distinct promise, that the Assyrian would neither come into the city nor besiege it, because the Lord was sheltering it (vers. 32–34; Isa. xxxvii. 33–35). In the first part the words are addressed with poetic vivacity directly to Sennacherib, and scourge his haughty boastings by pointing to the ridicule and scorn which would follow him on his departure from the land.—Ver. 21. "The virgin daughter Zion despises thee, the daughter Jerusalem shakes the head behind thee." By daughter Zion, daughter Jerusalem, we are not to understand the inhabitants of Zion, or of Jerusalem, as though בַּת stood for בָּנִים or בְּנֵי (Ges., Hitzig, and others); but the city itself with its inhabitants is pictorially personified as a daughter and virgin, and the construct state בַּת־צִיּוֹן is to be taken, like נְהַר פְּרָת, as in apposition: "daughter Zion," not daughter of Zion (*vid.* Ges. § 116, 5; Ewald, § 287, *e*). Even in the case of בְּתוּלַת the construct state expresses simply the relation of apposition. Zion is called a "virgin" as being an inviolable city to the Assyrians, *i.e.* one which they cannot conquer. Shaking the head is a gesture denoting derision and pleasure at another's misfortune (cf. Ps. xxii. 8, cix. 25, etc.). "Behind thee," *i.e.* after thee as thou goest away, is placed first as a pictorial feature for the sake of emphasis.—Vers. 22, 23. This derision falls upon the Assyrian, for having blasphemed the Lord God by his foolish boasting about his irresistible power. "Whom hast thou despised and blasphemed, and against whom hast thou lifted up the voice? and thou liftest up thine eyes against the Holy One of Israel." Lifting up the voice refers to the tone of threatening assumption, in which Rabshakeh and Sennacherib had spoken. Lifting up the eyes on high, *i.e.* to the heavens, signifies simply looking up to the sky (cf. Isa. xl. 26), not "directing proud looks against God" (Ges.). Still less is מָרוֹם to be taken adverbially in the sense of haughtily, as Thenius and Knobel suppose. The bad sense of proud arrogance lies in the words which follow, "against the Holy One of Israel," or in the case of Isaiah, where אֶל stands for עַל, in the context, viz. the parallelism of the members. God is called the Holy One of Israel as He who manifests His holiness in and upon Israel. This title of the Deity is one of the peculiarities of Isaiah's range of thought, although it originated with Asaph (Ps. lxxviii. 41; see at Isa. i. 4). This insult to the holy God consisted in the fact that Sennacherib had said through his servants (vers. 23, 24): "With my chariots upon chariots I have ascended the height of the mountains, the uttermost part of Lebanon, so that I felled the tallness of its cedars, the choice of its cypresses, and came to the shelter of its border, to the forest of its orchard. I have dug and drunk strange water, so that I dried up all the rivers of Egypt with the sole of my feet." The words put into the mouth of the Assyrian are expressive of the feeling which underlay all his blasphemies (Drechsler). The two verses are kept quite uniform, the second hemistich in both cases expressing the result of the first, that is to say, what the Assyrian intended still further to perform after having accomplished what is stated in the first hemistich. When he has ascended the heights of Lebanon, he devastates the glorious trees of the mountain. Consequently in ver. 24 the drying up of the Nile of Egypt is to be taken as the result of the digging of wells in the parched desert; in other words, it is to be interpreted as descriptive of the devastation of Egypt, whose whole fertility depended upon its being watered by the Nile and its canals. We cannot therefore take these verses exactly as Drechsler does; that is to say, we cannot assume that the Assyrian is speaking in the first hemistichs of both verses of what he (not necessarily Sennacherib himself, but one of his predecessors) has actually performed. For even if the ascent of the uttermost heights of Lebanon had been performed by one of the kings of Assyria, there is no historical evidence whatever that Sennacherib or one of his predecessors had already forced his way into Egypt. The words are therefore to be understood in a figurative sense, as an individualizing picture of the conquests which the Assyrians had already accomplished, and those which they were still intending to effect; and this assumption does not necessarily exhibit Sennacherib "as a mere braggart, who boastfully heaps up in ridiculous hyperbole an enumeration of the things which he means to perform" (Drechsler). For if the Assyrian had not ascended with the whole multitude of his war-chariots to the loftiest summits of

Lebanon, to fell its cedars and its cypresses, Lebanon had set no bounds to his plans of conquest, so that Sennacherib might very well represent his forcing his way into Canaan as an ascent of the lofty peaks of this mountain range. Lebanon is mentioned, partly as a range of mountains that was quite inaccessible to war-chariots, and partly as the northern defence of the land of Canaan, through the conquest of which one made himself lord of the land. And so far as Lebanon is used synecdochically for the land of which it formed the defence, the hewing down of its cedars and cypresses, those glorious witnesses of the creation of God, denotes the devastation of the whole land, with all its glorious works of nature and of human hands. The chief strength of the early Asiatic conquerors consisted in the multitude of their war-chariots: they are therefore brought into consideration simply as signs of vast military resources; the fact that they could only be used on level ground being therefore disregarded. The *Chethîb* רֶכֶב רִכְבִּי, "my chariots upon chariots," is used poetically for an innumerable multitude of chariots, as גּוֹב גֹּבַי for an innumerable host of locusts (Nah. iii. 17), and is more original than the *Keri* רֹב רִכְבִּי, the multitude of my chariots, which simply follows Isaiah. The "height of the mountains" is more precisely defined by the emphatic יַרְכְּתֵי לְבָנוֹן, the uttermost sides, *i.e.* the loftiest heights, of Lebanon, just as יַרְכְּתֵי בוֹר in Isa. xiv. 15 and Ezek. xxxii. 23 are the uttermost depths of Sheol. קוֹמַת אֲרָזָיו, his tallest cedars. מִבְחוֹר בְּרֹשָׁיו, his most select or finest cypresses. מְלוֹן קִצֹּה, for which Isaiah has the more usual מְרוֹם קִצּוֹ, "the height of his end," is the loftiest point of Lebanon on which a man can rest, not a lodging built on the highest point of Lebanon (Cler., Vitr., Ros.). יַעַר כַּרְמִלּוֹ, the forest of his orchard, *i.e.* the forest resembling an orchard. The reference is to the celebrated cedar-forest between the loftiest peaks of Lebanon at the village of *Bjerreh* (see at 1 Kings v. 20).—Ver. 24 refers to the intended conquest of Egypt. Just as Lebanon could not stop the expeditions of the Assyrians, or keep them back from the conquest of the land of Canaan, so the desert of *et Tih*, which separated Egypt from Asia, notwithstanding its want of water (cf. Herod. iii. 5; Rob. *Pal.* i. p. 262), was no hindrance to him, which could prevent his forcing his way through it and laying Egypt waste. The digging of water is, of course, not merely "a reopening of the wells that had been choked with rubbish, and the cisterns that had been covered up before the approaching enemy" (Thenius), but the digging of wells in the waterless desert. מַיִם זָרִים, strange water, is not merely water belonging to others, but water not belonging to this soil (Drechsler), *i.e.* water supplied by a region which had none at other times. By the perfects the thing is represented as already done, as exposed to no doubt whatever; we must bear in mind, however, that the desert of et Tih is not expressly named, but the expression is couched in such general terms, that we may also assume that it includes what the Assyrian had really effected in his expeditions through similar regions. The drying up of the rivers with the soles of the feet is a hyperbolical expression denoting the omnipotence with which the Assyrian rules over the earth. Just as he digs water in the desert where no water is to be had, so does he annihilate it where mighty rivers exist.[1] יְאֹרֵי are the arms and canals of the *Ycor*, *i.e.* of the Nile. מָצוֹר, a rhetorical epithet for Egypt, used not only here, but also in Isa. xix. 6 and Mic. vii. 12.—Vers. 25 sqq. To this foolish boasting the prophet opposes the divine purpose which had been formed long ago, and according to which the Assyrian, without knowing it or being willing to acknowledge it, had acted simply as the instrument of the Lord, who had given him the power to destroy, but who would soon restrain his ranting against Him, the true God.—Ver. 25. "Hast thou not heard? Long ago have I done this, from the days of olden time have I formed it! Now have I brought it to pass, that fortified cities should be to be destroyed into waste heaps." Ver. 26. "And their inhabitants, short of hand, were dismayed and put to shame; they were herb of the field and green of the turf, grass of the roofs and blighted corn before the stalk." Ver. 27. "And thy sitting and thy going out and thy coming I know, and thy raging against me." Ver. 28. "Because of thy raging against me and thy safety, which rise up into my ears, I put my ring into thy nose, and my bridle into thy lips, and bring thee back by the way by which thou hast come." The words are still addressed to the Assyrian, of whom the Lord inquires whether he does not know that the destructive deeds performed by him had been determined very long before. "Hast thou not heard?" namely, what follows, what the Lord had long ago made known through His prophets in Judah (cf. Isa. vii. 7-9, xvi. 17-20, viii. 1-4 and 7, etc.). לְמֵרָחוֹק, from distant time have I done it, etc., refers to the divine ordering and governing of the events of the universe, which God has purposed and established from the very beginning of time. The pronoun אֹתָהּ, and the suffixes attached to יְצַרְתִּיהָ and הֲבֵיאתִיהָ, do not refer with vague generality to the substance of vers. 23 and 24, *i.e.* to the boastings of the Assyrians quoted there (Drechsler); but to וּתְהִי לַהְשׁוֹת, *i.e.* to the conquests and devastations which the Assyrian had really effected. The וְ before יצרתיה introduces the apodosis, as is frequently the case after a preceding definition of time (cf. Ges. § 155, *a*). וּתְהִי לַהְשׁוֹת, "that it may be to destroy" (לַהְשׁוֹת, a contraction of לְהַשְׁאוֹת, *Keri* and Isaiah, from שָׁאָה; see Ewald, § 73, *c*, and 245, *b*), *i.e.* that it shall be destroyed,—according to a turn which is very common in Isaiah, like הָיָה לְבָעֵר, it is to burn = it shall be burned (cf. Isa. v. 5, vi. 13, xliv. 15, and Ewald, § 237, *c*). The rendering given by Ges., Knob., Then., and others, "that thou mayest be for destruction," is at variance with this usage.—Ver. 26 is closely connected, so far as the sense is concerned, with the last clause of ver. 25, but in form it is only loosely attached: "and their inhabitants were," instead of "that their inhabitants might be." קִצְרֵי יָד, of short hand, *i.e.* without power to offer a successful resistance (cf. Num. xi. 23, and Isa. l. 2, lix. 1).—They were herbage of the field, etc., just as perishable as the herbage, grass, etc., which quickly fade away (cf. Ps. xxxvii. 2, xc. 5, 6; Isa. xl. 6). The grass of the roofs fades still more quickly, because it cannot strike deep roots (cf. Ps. cxxix. 6). Blighted corn before the stalk, *i.e.* corn which is blighted and withered up, before it shoots up into a stalk. In Isaiah we have שְׁדֵמָה instead of שְׁדֵפָה, with a change of the labials, probably for the purpose of preserving an assonance with קָמָה, which must not therefore be altered into שְׁדֵמָה. The thought in the two verses is this: The Assyrian does not owe his victories and conquests to his irresistible might, but purely to the fact that God had long ago resolved to deliver the nations into his hands, so that it was possible to overcome them without their being able to offer any resistance. This the Assyrian had not perceived, but in his daring pride had exalted himself above the living God. This conduct of his the Lord was well acquainted with, and He would humble him for it. Sitting and going out and coming denote all the actions of a man, like sitting down and rising up in Ps. cxxxix. 2. Instead of rising up, we generally find going out and coming in (cf. Deut. xxviii. 6 and Ps. cxxi. 8). הִתְרַגֶּזְךָ, thy raging, *commotio furibunda, quæ ex ira nascitur superbiæ mixta* (Vitr.). We must repeat יַעַן before שַׁאֲנַנְךָ; and עָלָה בְאָזְנָי is to be taken in a relative sense: on account of thy self-security, which has come to my ears. שַׁאֲנָן is the security of the ungodly which springs from the feeling of great superiority in power. The figurative words, "I put my ring into thy nose," are taken from the custom of restraining wild animals, such as lions (Ezek. xix. 4) and other wild beasts (Ezek. xxix. 4 and Isa. xxx. 28), in this manner. For "the bridle in the lips" of ungovernable horses, see Ps. xxxii. 9. To lead a person back by the way by which he had come, *i.e.* to lead him back disappointed, without having reached the goal that he set before him.

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[1] Compare the similar boasting of Alarich, already quoted by earlier commentators, in Claudian, *de bello Geth.* v. 526 sqq.:

cum cesserit omnis
Obsequiis natura meis? subsidere nostris
Sub pedibus montes, arescere vidimus amnes.

. . . .

v. 532. *Fregi Alpes, galeis Padum victricibus hausi.*

To confirm what he had said, the prophet gave to Hezekiah a sign (vers. 29 sqq.): "Eat this year what groweth in the fallow, and in the second year what groweth wild, and in the third year sow and reap and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit thereof." That the words are not addressed to the king of Assyria as in ver. 28, but to Hezekiah, is evident from their contents. This sudden change in the person addressed may be explained from the fact that from ver. 29 the words contain a perfectly fresh train of thought. For וְזֶה־לְּךָ הָאוֹת see Ex. iii. 12, 1 Sam. ii. 34 and xiv. 10; also Jer. xliv. 29. In all these passages אוֹת, *σημεῖον*, is not a (supernatural) wonder, a מוֹפֵת as in 1 Kings xiii. 3, but consists simply in the prediction of natural events, which serve as credentials to a prediction, whereas in Isa. vii. 14 and xxxviii. 7 a miracle is given as an אוֹת. The inf. abs. אָכוֹל is not used for the pret. (Ges., Then., and others), but for the imperf. or fut.: "one will eat." הַשָּׁנָה, the (present) year. סָפִיחַ signifies the corn which springs up and grows from the grains that have been shaken out the previous year (Lev. xxv. 5, 11). סָחִישׁ (in Isa. שָׁחִיס) is explained by Abulw. as signifying the corn which springs up again from the roots of what has been sown. The etymology of the word is uncertain, so that it is impossible to decide which of the two forms is the original one. For the fact itself compare the evidence adduced in the Comm. on Lev. xxv. 7, that in Palestine and other lands two or three harvests can be reaped from one sowing.—The signs mentioned do not enable us to determine with certainty how long the Assyrians were in the land. All that can be clearly gathered from the words, "in this and the following year will they live upon that which has sprung up without any sowing," is that for two years, *i.e.* in two successive autumns, the fields could not be cultivated because the enemy had occupied the land and laid it waste. But whether the occupation lasted two years, or only a year and a little over, depends upon the time of the year at which the Assyrians entered the land. If the invasion of Judah took place in autumn, shortly before the time for sowing, and the miraculous destruction of the Assyrian forces occurred a year after about the same time, the sowing of two successive years would be prevented, and the population of Judah would be compelled to live for two years upon what had sprung up without sowing. Consequently both the prophecy of Isaiah and the fulfilment recorded in vers. 35, 36 would fall in the autumn, when the Assyrians had ruled for a whole year in the land; so that the prophet was able to say: in this year and in the second (*i.e.* the next) will they eat after-growth and wild growth; inasmuch as when he said this, the first year had not quite expired. Even if the overthrow of the Assyrians took place immediately afterwards (cf. ver. 35), with the extent to which they had carried out the desolation of the land, many of the inhabitants having been slain or taken prisoners, and many others having been put to flight, it would be utterly impossible in the same year to cultivate the fields and sow them, and the people would be obliged to live in the second or following year upon what had grown wild, until the harvest of the second year, when the land could be properly cultivated, or rather till the third year, when it could be reaped again.[1]

The sign is followed in vers. 30, 31 by the distinct promise of the deliverance of Judah and Jerusalem, for which Isaiah uses the sign itself as a type. "And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah will again strike roots downwards and bear fruit upwards; for from Jerusalem will go forth a remnant, and that which is escaped from Mount Zion; the zeal of Jehovah will do this." יָסַף שֹׁרֶשׁ, to add roots. *i.e.* to strike fresh roots. The meaning is, that Judah will not succumb to this judgment. The remnant of the nation that has escaped from destruction by the Assyrians will once more grow and flourish vigorously; for from Jerusalem will a rescued remnant go forth. פְּלֵיטָה denotes those who have escaped destruction by the judgment (cf. Isa. iv. 2, x. 20, etc.). The deliverance was attached to Jerusalem or to Mount Zion, not so much because the power of the Assyrians was to be destroyed before the gates of Jerusalem, as because of the greater importance which Jerusalem and Mount Zion, as the centre of the kingdom of God, the seat of the God-King, possessed in relation to the covenant-nation, so that, according to Isa. ii. 3, it was thence that the Messianic salvation was also to proceed. This deliverance is traced to the zeal of the Lord on behalf of His people and against His foes (see at Ex. xx. 5), like the coming of the Messiah in Isa. ix. 6 to establish an everlasting kingdom of peace and righteousness. The deliverance of Judah out of the power of Asshur was a prelude and type of the deliverance of the people of God by the Messiah out of the power of all that was ungodly. The צְבָאוֹת of Isaiah is omitted after יְהוָה, just as in ver. 15; though here it is supplied by the Masora as *Keri*. —In vers. 32–34 Isaiah concludes by announcing that Sennacherib will not come to Jerusalem, nor even shoot at the city and besiege it, but will return disappointed, because the Lord will defend and save the city for the sake of His promise. The result of the whole prophecy is introduced with לָכֵן: therefore, because this is how the matter stands, viz. as explained in what precedes. אֶל־מֶלֶךְ, with regard to the king, as in ver. 20. לֹא יְקַדְּמֶנָּה מָגֵן, "he will not attack it with a shield," *i.e.* will not advance with shields to make an attack upon it. קִדֵּם with a double accusative, as in Ps. xxi. 4. It only occurs here in a hostile sense: to come against, as in Ps. xviii. 19, *i.e.* to advance against a city, to storm it. The four clauses of the verse stand in a graduated relation to one another: not to take, not even to shoot at and attack, yea, not even to besiege the city, will he come. In ver. 33*a* we have ver. 28*b* taken up again, and ver. 32*a* is repeated in ver. 33*b* for the purpose of strengthening the promise. Instead of יָבוֹא בָּהּ we have in Isaiah בָּא בָּהּ :א“ by which he has come.” The perfect is actually more exact, and the imperfect may be explained from the fact that Sennacherib was at that very time advancing against Jerusalem. In ver. 34 we have גַּנּוֹתִי אֶל instead of the גַּנּוֹתִי עַל of Isaiah; עַל is more correct than אֶל. “For my sake,” as Hezekiah had prayed in ver. 19; and “for my servant David's sake,” because Jehovah, as the unchangeably true One, must fulfil the promise which He gave to David (see at 1 Kings xi. 13).

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[1] There is no necessity, therefore, to explain the sign here given, either by the assumption of a sabbatical year, with or without a year of jubilee following, or by supposing that the Assyrians did not depart immediately after the catastrophe described in ver. 35, but remained till after they had attempted an expedition into Egypt, or indeed by any other artificial hypothesis.

Vers. 35–37. *The fulfilment of the divine promise.*—Ver. 35. “It came to pass in that night, that the angel of the Lord went out and smote in the army of the Assyrian 185,000 men; and when they (those that were left, including the king) rose up in the morning, behold there were they all (*i.e.* all who had perished) dead corpses,” *i.e.* they had died in their sleep. מֵתִים is added to strengthen פְּגָרִים: lifeless corpses. בַּלַּיְלָה הַהוּא is in all probability the night following the day on which Isaiah had foretold to Hezekiah the deliverance of Jerusalem. Where the Assyrian army was posted at the time when this terrible stroke fell upon it is not stated, since the account is restricted to the principal fact. One portion of it was probably still before Jerusalem; the remainder were either in front of Libnah (ver. 8), or marching against Jerusalem. From the fact that Sennacherib's second embassy (vers. 9 sqq.) was not accompanied by a body of troops, it by no means follows that the large army which had come with the first embassy (ch. xviii. 17) had withdrawn again, or had even removed to Libnah on the return of Rabshakeh to his king (ch. xix. 8). The very opposite may be inferred with much greater justice from ch. xix. 32. And the smiting of 185,000 men by an angel of the Lord by no means presupposes that the whole of Sennacherib's army was concentrated at one spot. The blow could certainly fall upon the Assyrians wherever they were standing or were encamped. The “angel of the Lord” is the same angel that smote as הַמַּשְׁחִית the first-born of Egypt (Ex. xii. 23, compared with vers. 12 and 13), and inflicted the pestilence upon Israel after the numbering of the people by David (2 Sam. xxiv. 15, 16). The last passage renders the conjecture a very probable one, that the slaying of the Assyrians was also effected by a terrible pestilence. But the number of the persons slain—185,000 in a single night—so immensely surpasses the effects even of the most terrible plagues, that this fact cannot be interpreted naturally; and the deniers of miracle have therefore felt obliged to do violence to the text, and to pronounce either the statement that it was "the same night" or the number of the slain a mythical exaggeration.[1]—Ver. 36. This divine judgment compelled Sennacherib to retreat without delay, and to return to Nineveh, as Isaiah, 28 and 32, had predicted. The heaping up of the verbs: "he decamped, departed, and returned," expresses the hurry of the march home. וַיֵּשֶׁב בְּנִינְוֵה, "he sate, *i.e.* remained, in Nineveh," implies not merely that Sennacherib lived for some time after his return, but also that he did not undertake any fresh expedition against Judah. On *Nineveh* see at Gen. x. 11.—Ver. 37 contains an account of Sennacherib's death. When he was worshipping in the temple of his god Nisroch, his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer slew him, and fled into the land of Ararat, and his son Esarhaddon became king in his stead. With regard to נִסְרֹךְ, *Nisroch,* all that seems to be firmly established is that he was an eagle-deity, and represented by the eagle- or vulture-headed human figure with wings, which is frequently depicted upon the Assyrian monuments, "not only in colossal proportions upon the walls and watching the portals of the rooms, but also constantly in the groups upon the embroidered robes. When it is introduced in this way, we see it constantly fighting with other mythical animals, such as human-headed oxen or lions; and in these conflicts it always appears to be victorious," from which we may infer that it was a type of the supreme deity (see Layard's *Nineveh and its Remains*). The eagle was worshipped as a god by the Arabs (Pococke, *Specim.* pp. 94, 199), was regarded as sacred to *Melkarth* by the Phœnicians (*Nonnus*, Dionys. xl. 495, 528), and, according to a statement of Philo, *Bybl.* (in Euseb. *Præpar. evang.* i. 10), that Zoroaster taught that the supreme deity was represented with an eagle's head, it was also a symbol of Ormuzd among the Persians; consequently Movers (*Phöniz.* i. pp. 68, 506, 507) regards *Nisroch* as the supreme deity of the Assyrians. It is not improbable that it was also connected with the constellation of the eagle (see Ideler, *Ursprung der Sternnamen*, p. 416). On the other hand, the current interpretation of the name from נֶשֶׁר (נִשְׁר, Chald.; نسر, Arab.), eagle, vulture, with the Persian adjective termination *ok* or *ach*, is very doubtful, not merely on account of the ס in נִסְרֹךְ, but chiefly because this name does not occur in Assyrian, but simply *Asar*, *Assar*, and *Asarak* as the name of a deity which is met with in many Assyrian proper names. The last is also adopted by the LXX., who (*ed. Aldin. Compl.*) have rendered נסרך by *'Ασαράχ* in Isaiah, and *Εσοράχ* (*cod. Vatic.*) in 2 Kings, by the side of which the various readings *Μεσεράχ* in our text (*cod. Vat.*) and *Νασαράχ* in Isaiah are evidently secondary readings emended from the Hebrew, since Josephus (*Ant.* x. 1, 5) has the form *'Αρασκής*, which is merely somewhat "Græcized." The meaning of these names is still in obscurity, even if there should be some foundation for the assumption that *Assar* belongs to the same root as the name of the people and land, *Asshur*. The connection between the form *Nisroch* and *Asarak* is also still obscure. Compare the collection which J. G. Müller has made of the different conjectures concerning this deity in the Art. *Nisroch* in Herzog's *Cycl.*—*Adrammelech*, according to ch. xvii. 31, was the name of a deity of Sepharvaim, which was here borne by the king's son. שַׂרְאֶצֶר, *Sharezer*, is said to mean "prince of fire," and was probably also borrowed from a deity. בָּנָיו (Isa.) is wanting in our text, but is supplied by the Masora in the *Keri*. The "land of *Ararat*" was a portion of the high land of Armenia; according to Moses v. Chorene, the central portion of it with the mountains of the same name (see at Gen. viii. 4). The slaying of Sennacherib is also confirmed by Alex. Polyhistor, or rather Berosus (in Euseb. *Chron. Armen.* i. p. 43), who simply names, however, a son *Ardumusanus* as having committed the murder, and merely mentions a second *Asordanius* as viceroy of Babylon.[1] The identity of the latter with *Esarhaddon* is beyond all doubt. The name אֵסַר־חַדֹּן, *Esar-cha-don,* consisting of two parts with the guttural inserted, the usual termination in Assyrian and Babylonian, *Assar-ach,* is spelt *'Ασορδάν* in the LXX., *Σαχερδονός* in Tobit—probably formed from *'Ασερ-χ-δονοσορ* by a transposition of the letters,—by Josephus *'Ασσαραχόδδας,* by Berosus (in the *armen. Euseb.*) *Asordanes,* by Abyden. *ibid. Axerdis,* in the *Canon Ptol.* *'Ασαράδινος,* and lastly in Ezra iv. 10 mutilated into אָסְנַפַּר, *Osnappar* (Chald.), and in the LXX. *'Ασσεναφάρ*; upon the Assyrian monuments, according to Oppert, *Assur-akh-iddin* (cf. M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Ass.* p. 38). The length of his reign is uncertain. The statements of Berosus, that he was first of all viceroy of Babylon, and then for eight years king of Assyria, and that of the *Canon Ptol.*, that he reigned for thirteen years in Babylon, are decidedly incorrect. Brandis (*Rerum Assyr. tempora emend.* p. 41) conjectures that he reigned twenty-eight years, but in his work *Ueber den histor. Gewinn,* pp. 73, 74, he suggests seventeen years. M. v. Niebuhr (*ut sup.* p. 77), on the other hand, reckons his reign at twenty-four years.

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[1] The assertion of Thenius, that vers. 35-37 are borrowed from a different source from ch. xviii. 13-19, 34 and xx. 1-19, rests upon purely arbitrary suppositions and groundless assumptions, and is only made in the interest of the mythical interpretation of the miracle. And his conclusion, that "since the catastrophe was evidently (?) occasioned by the sudden breaking out of a pestilence, the scene of it was no doubt the pestilential Egypt," is just as unfounded,—as if Egypt were the only land in which a pestilence could suddenly have broken out.—The account given by Herodotus (ii. 141), that on the prayer of king *Sethon,* a priest of Vulcan, the deity promised him victory over the great advancing army of Sennacherib, and that during the night mice spread among the enemy (*i.e.* in the Assyrian camp at Pelusium), and ate up the quivers and bows, and the leather straps of the shields, so that the next morning they were obliged to flee without their weapons, and many were cut down, is simply a legendary imitation of our account, *i.e.* an Egyptian variation of the defeat of Sennacherib in Judah. The eating up of the Assyrian weapons by mice is merely the explanation given to Herodotus by the Egyptian priests of the hieroglyphical legend on the standing figure of *Sethos* at Memphis, from which we cannot even gather the historical fact that Sennacherib really advanced as far as Pelusium.

CHAP. XX. HEZEKIAH'S ILLNESS AND RECOVERY. MERODACH BALADAN'S EMBASSY. DEATH OF HEZEKIAH.

Vers. 1–11. HEZEKIAH'S ILLNESS AND RECOVERY.—Compare the parallel account in Isa. xxxviii. with Hezekiah's psalm of thanksgiving for his recovery (vers. 9–20 of Isaiah).—Ver. 1. "In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death." By the expression "in those days" the illness of Hezekiah is merely assigned in a general manner to the same time as the events previously described. That it did not occur after the departure of the Assyrians, but at the commencement of the invasion of Sennacherib, *i.e.* in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah's reign, is evident from ver. 6, namely, both from the fact that in answer to his prayer fifteen years more of life were promised him, and that he nevertheless reigned only twenty-nine years (ch. xviii. 2), and also from the fact that God promised to deliver him out of the hand of the Assyrians and to defend Jerusalem. The widespread notion that his sickness was an attack of plague, and was connected with the pestilence which had broken out in the Assyrian camp, is thereby deprived of its chief support, apart from the fact that the epithet שְׁחִין (ver. 7), which is applied to the sickness, does not indicate pestilence. Isaiah then called upon him to set his house in order. צַו לְבֵיתֶךָ: set thy house in order, lit. command or order with regard to thy house, not declare thy (last) will to thy family (Ges., Knob.), for צִוָּה is construed with the *accus. pers.* in the sense of commanding anything, whereas here לְ is synonymous with אֶל (2 Sam. xvii. 23). "For thou wilt die and not live;" *i.e.* thy sickness is to death, namely, without the miraculous help of God. Sickness to death in the very prime of life (Hezekiah was then in the fortieth year of his age) appeared to the godly men of the Old Testament a sign of divine displeasure. Hezekiah was therefore greatly agitated by this announcement, and sought for consolation and help in prayer. He turned his face to the wall, *sc.* of the room, not of the temple (Chald.). *i.e.* away from those who were standing round, to be able to pray more collectedly.—Ver. 3. In his prayer he appealed to his walking before the Lord in truth and with a thoroughly devoted heart, and to his acting in a manner that was well-pleasing to God, in perfect accordance with the legal standpoint of the Old Testament, which demanded of the godly righteousness of life according to the law. This did not imply by any means a self-righteous trust in his own virtue; for walking before God with a thoroughly devoted heart was impossible without faith. "And Hezekiah wept violently," not merely at the fact that he was to die without having an heir to the throne, since Manasseh was not born till three years afterwards (Joseph., Ephr. Syr., etc.), but also because he was to die in the very midst of his life, since God had promised long life to the righteous.—Vers. 4 sqq. This prayer of the godly king was answered immediately. Isaiah had not gone out of the midst of the city, when the word of the Lord came to him to return to the king, and tell him that the Lord would cure him in three days and add fifteen years to his life, and that He would also deliver him from the power of the Assyrians and defend Jerusalem. הָעִיר הַתִּיכֹנָה, the middle city, *i.e.* the central portion of the city, namely, the Zion city, in which the royal citadel stood. The *Keri* חָצֵר הת', the central court, not of the temple, but of the royal citadel, which is adopted in all the ancient versions, is nothing more than an interpretation of the עִיר as denoting the royal castle, after the analogy of ch. x. 25. The distinct assurance added to the promise "I will heal thee," viz. "on the third day thou wilt go into the house of the Lord," was intended as a pledge to the king of the promised cure. The announcement that God would add fifteen years to his life is not put into the prophet's mouth *ex eventu* (Knobel and others); for the opinion that distinct statements as to time are at variance with the nature of prophecy is merely based upon an *a priori* denial of the supernatural character of prophecy. The words, "and I will deliver thee out of the hand of the Assyrians," imply most distinctly that the Assyrian had only occupied the land and threatened Jerusalem, and had not yet withdrawn. The explanation given by Vitringa and others, that the words contain simply a promise of deliverance out of the hand of the oppressor for the next fifteen years, puts a meaning into them which they do not contain, as is clearly shown by Isa. xxxvii. 20, where this thought is expressed in a totally different manner. וְגַנּוֹתִי עַל־הָעִיר וגו': as in ch. xix. 34, where the prophet repeated this divine promise in consequence of the attempt of Sennacherib to get Jerusalem into his power.—Ver. 7. Isaiah ordered a lump of figs to be laid upon the boil, and Hezekiah recovered (וַיֶּחִי: he revived again). It is of course assumed as self-evident, that Isaiah returned to the king in consequence of a divine revelation, and communicated to him the word of the Lord which he had received.[1] דְּבֶלֶת תְּאֵנִים is a mass consisting of compressed figs, which the ancients were in the habit of applying, according to many testimonies (see Celsii *Hierob.* ii. p. 373), in the case of plague-boils and abscesses of other kinds, because the fig διαφορεῖ σκληρίας (Dioscor.) and *ulcera aperit* (Plin.), and which is still used for softening ulcers. שְׁחִין, an abscess, is never used in connection with plague or plague-boils, but only to denote the abscesses caused by leprosy (Job ii. 7, 8), and other abscesses of an inflammatory kind (Ex. ix. 9 sqq.). In the case of Hezekiah it is probably a carbuncle that is intended.

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[1] With regard to the statement of Abydenus in Euseb. *l. c.* p. 53, that Sennacherib was followed by *Nergilus,* who was slain by his son *Adrameles,* who again was murdered by his brother *Axerdis,* and its connection with Berosus and the biblical account, see M. v. Niebuhr, *Geschichte Assurs,* pp. 361 sqq. *Nergilus* is probably the same person as *Sharezer,* and *Axerdis* as *Esarnaddon.*

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[1] The account is still more abridged in the text of Isaiah. In ver. 4 the precise time of the prayer is omitted; in ver. 5 the words, "behold, I will cure thee, on the third day thou shalt go into the house of the Lord;" and in ver. 6 the words, "for mine own sake and my servant David's sake." The four verses 8–11, which treat of the miraculous signs, are also very much contracted in Isaiah (vers. 7 and 8); and vers. 7 and 8 of our text are only given at the close of Hezekiah's psalm of praise in that of Isaiah (vers. 21 and 22).

After the allusion to the cure and recovery of Hezekiah, we have an account in vers. 8 sqq. of the sign by which Isaiah confirmed the promise given to the king of the prolongation of his life. In the order of time the contents of ver. 7 follow ver. 11, since the prophet in all probability first of all disclosed the divine promise to the king, and then gave him the sign, and after that appointed the remedy and had it applied. At the same time, it is also quite possible that he first of all directed the lump of figs to be laid upon the boil, and then made known to him the divine promise, and guaranteed it by the sign. In this case וַיֶּחִ׳ merely anticipates the order of events. The sign which Isaiah gave to the king, at his request, consisted in the miraculous movement of the shadow backward upon the sundial of Ahaz.—Ver. 9. הָלַךְ הַצֵּל: "the shadow is gone ten degrees, if it should go back ten degrees?" The rendering, *visne umbram solarii decem gradibus progredi an . . . regredi,* which Maurer still gives after the Vulgate, *vis an ut ascendat . . . an ut revertatur,* cannot be grammatically reconciled with the perfect הָלַךְ, and is merely a conjecture founded upon the answer of Hezekiah.[1] According to this answer, "it is easy for the shadow to decline (*i.e.* to go farther down) ten degrees; no (*sc.* that shall not be a sign to me), but if the shadow turn ten degrees backward," Isaiah seems to have given the king a choice as to the sign, namely, whether the shadow should go ten degrees forward or backward. But this does not necessarily follow from the words quoted. Hezekiah may have understood the prophet's words הָלַךְ הַצֵּל וגו׳ hypothetically: "has the shadow gone (advanced) ten degrees, whether it should," etc.; and may have replied, the advance of the shadow would not be a sure sign to him, but only its going back.—Ver. 11. Isaiah then prayed to the Lord, and the Lord "turned back the shadow (caused it to go back) upon the sun-dial, where it had gone down, on the sun-dial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward." מַעֲלוֹת אָחָז cannot be understood, as it has been by the LXX., Joseph., Syr., as referring to a flight of steps at the palace of Ahāz, which was so arranged that the shadow of an object standing near indicated the hours, but is no doubt a gnomon, a sun-dial which Ahaz may have received from Babylonia, where sun-dials were discovered (Herod. ii. 109). Nothing further can be inferred from the words with regard to its construction, since the ancients had different kinds of sun-dials (cf. Martini *Abhandlung von den Sonnenuhren der Alten*, Lpz. 1777). The word מַעֲלוֹת, steps in the literal sense, is transferred to the *scala*, which the shadow had to traverse both up and down upon the disk of the sun-dial, and is used both to denote the separate degrees of this *scala*, and also for the sum-total of these *scala*, *i.e.* for the sun-dial itself, without there being any necessity to assume that it was an obelisk-like pillar erected upon an elevated place with steps running round it (Knobel), or a long portable scale of twice ten steps with a gnomon (Gumpach, *Alttestl. Studien*, pp. 181 sqq.). All that follows from the descent of the shadow is that the dial of the gnomon was placed in a vertical direction; and the fact that the shadow went ten degrees down or backward, simply presupposes that the gnomon had at least twenty degrees, and therefore that the degrees indicated smaller portions of time than hours. If, then, it is stated in ver. 8*b* of Isaiah that the sun went back ten degrees, whereas the going back of the shadow had been previously mentioned in agreement with our text, it is self-evident that the sun stands for the shining of the sun which was visible upon the dial-plate, and which made the shadow recede. We are not, of course, to suppose that the sun in the sky and the shadow on the sun-dial went back at the same time, as Knobel assumes. So far as the miracle is concerned, the words of the text do not require that we should assume that the sun receded, or the rotation of the earth was reversed, as Eph. Syr. and others supposed, but simply affirm that there was a miraculous movement backward of the shadow upon the dial, which might be accounted for from a miraculous refraction of the rays of the sun, effected by God at the prophet's prayer, of which slight analoga are met with in the ordinary course of nature.[1] This miraculous sign was selected as a significant one in itself, to confirm the promise of a fresh extension of life which had been given to Hezekiah by the grace of God in opposition to the natural course of things. The retrograde movement of the shadow upon the sun-dial indicated that Hezekiah's life, which had already arrived at its close by natural means, was to be put back by a miracle of divine omnipotence, so that it might continue for another series of years.

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[1] Hitzig and Knobel would therefore read הָלֹךְ, though without furnishing any proofs that the inf. abs. is used for the future in the first clause of a double question, especially if the ה interrog. is wanting, and there is no special emphasis upon the verbal idea.

Vers. 12–19. *The Babylonian embassy, and Hezekiah's imprudence* (cf. Isa. xxxix.).—Ver. 12. "At that time Berodach Baladan, king of Babel, sent a letter and a present to Hezekiah, because he had heard that Hezekiah was sick." By בָּעֵת הַהִיא the arrival of these ambassadors is merely assigned in the most general manner to the period following Hezekiah's recovery. But from the object of their mission, it is evident that they did not arrive in Jerusalem till after the overthrow and departure of Sennacherib, and therefore at least half a year after Hezekiah's recovery. The ostensible reason given is, that Berodach Baladan had heard of Hezekiah's illness, and therefore sent to congratulate him on his recovery; but in 2 Chron. xxxii. 31 the further reason is mentioned, that he wished to inquire concerning the miracle upon the sun-dial. But, as Josephus has shown, the true object, no doubt, was to make sure of Hezekiah's friendship in anticipation of his intended revolt from the Assyrian rule. *Berodach Baladan*, for *Merodach Baladan* (Isa.), with the labial changed, is the same person as the *Marodach Baladan* who reigned in Babylon for six months, according to Alex. Polyhistor, or rather Berosus (Euseb. *Chron. armen.* i. pp. 42, 43), and was slain by *Elibus*, and also the same as the *Mardokempad* who reigned, according to the *Can. Ptol.*, from 26 to 38 *ær. Nab.*, *i.e.* from 721 to 709 B.C. The first part of the name, מְרֹדָךְ, occurs in Jer. l. 2 in connection with *Bel* as the name of a Babylonian idol; and the whole name is found on a cylinder

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[1] As, for example, the phenomenon quoted by several commentators, which was observed at Metz in Lothringen in the year 1703 by the prior of the convent there, P. Romuald, and other persons, viz. that the shadow of a sun-dial went back an hour and a half.—The natural explanation of the miracle which is given by Thenius, who attributes it to an eclipse of the sun, needs no refutation.—For the different opinions of the earlier theologians, see Carpzov, *Apparat. crit.* p. 351 sqq.

(in the British Museum) which contains the first expeditions of Sennacherib against Babylon and Media, and upon the inscriptions at Khorsabad spelt either *Merodak-pal-dsana* (according to Brandis, *Ueber der Gewinn*, pp. 44 and 53) or *Marduk bal iddin* (according to Oppert).[1] Instead of כִּי שָׁמַע we have וַיִּשְׁמַע in Isaiah, which is not so clear, though it is probably more original; whereas the clause in Isaiah, כִּי חָלָה וַיֶּחֱזָק, "that he had been sick and had become strengthened, *i.e.* well again," is simply an elucidation of the כִּי חָלָה חִזְקִיָּהוּ of our text, in which the recovery is implied in the pluperfect "had been sick."—In ver. 13 וַיִּשְׁמַע is apparently a copyist's error for וַיִּשְׂמַח of Isaiah, which many of the codd. and ancient versions have even in our text. At the same time, the construction of שָׁמַע with עַל is also found in ch. xxii. 13.—עֲלֵיהֶם, concerning them, *i.e.* the ambassadors who had brought the letter and the present. In his delight at the honour paid to him by this embassy, Hezekiah showed the ambassadors all his treasure-house, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the costly oil, and all his arsenal, etc. The literal meaning of בֵּית נְכֹת is probably spice-house (Aquila, Symm., Vulg.), נְכֹת being a contraction of נְכֹאת in Gen. xxxvii. 25, whereas the derivation suggested from the Arabic كَبَّتَ, *farsit, implevit locum*, is much more wide of the mark. The house received its name from the spices for the storing of which it was really intended, although it was also used for the storing of silver and gold. שֶׁמֶן הַטּוֹב is not fine olive oil, but, according to the Rabbins and Movers (*Phöniz.* iii. p. 227), the valuable balsam oil which was obtained in the royal gardens; for olive oil, which was obtained in all Judæa, was not stored in the treasure-chambers along with gold, silver, and perfumes, but in special storehouses (1 Chron. xxvii. 28). בְּכָל־מֶמְשַׁלְתּוֹ, in all his dominion, *i.e.* in all the district which he was able to govern or control.—The existence of such treasures, of which, according to ver. 17, the ancestors of Hezekiah had collected a very large store, at so short a period after the departure of the Assyrians, is not at variance with ch. xviii. 15, 16, according to which Hezekiah had sent to Sennacherib all the silver in his treasuries, and even the gold plate upon the temple doors. For, in the first place, it is not stated that there was much silver and gold in the treasure-house, but the silver and gold are simply mentioned along with the spices; and, secondly, Hezekiah may have kept back from Sennacherib many a valuable piece of silver or gold, and have taken off the gold plate from the temple doors, to show the ambassadors of Sennacherib, who came to receive the money demanded as compensation, that he was not in a condition to give anything more. Moreover a great deal may have flowed into the treasuries since the payment of that tribute, partly from the presents which Hezekiah received from many quarters after the overthrow of Sennacherib (2 Chron. xxxii. 23), and partly from the booty that had been collected in the camp of the Assyrians after their hurried departure. And again, the treasures which the ancestors of Hezekiah had collected (ver. 17) may not have consisted of gold and silver exactly, but of different jewels and objects of art, which could not be applied to the payment of the tribute demanded by Sennacherib. And, lastly, "we must not overlook the fact, that it answered the purpose of the reporter to crowd together as much as possible, in order to show how anxious Hezekiah was to bring out and exhibit everything whatever that could contribute to the folly" (Drechsler). Hezekiah evidently wanted to show all his glory, because the arrival of the Babylonian ambassadors had flattered his vanity.—Vers. 14 sqq. Isaiah therefore announced to him the word of the Lord, that all his treasures would one day be carried to Babel, and some even of his sons would serve as chamberlains in the palace of the king of Babel. The sin of vanity was to be punished by the carrying away of that of which his heart was proud. Isaiah did not go to Hezekiah by his own impulse, but by the direction of God. His inquiries: "What have these men said, and whence do they come to thee?" were simply intended to lead the king to give expression to the thoughts of his heart. In the answer, "From a distant land have they come, from Babel," his vanity at the great honour that had been paid him comes clearly to light.—Ver. 18. The words, "of thy sons, which shall proceed from thee, which thou shalt beget," do not necessarily refer to actual *sons*, but only to *lineal* descendants. The *Chethîb* יִקַּח, "will one take," is to be preferred to the יִקָּחוּ of Isaiah and the

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[1] Compare M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Ass.* p. 40; and with regard to the chronological differences, on account of which many have called in question the identity of Merodach Baladan either with the *Marudach-Baladan* of Berosus or with the *Mardokempad* of the *Can. Ptol.*, see the discussion of this point at pp. 75 sqq.

Keri, as being the more difficult reading. סָרִיסִים, chamberlains, courtiers, not necessarily eunuchs, as in 1 Sam. viii. 15, etc.—For the fulfilment of this threat see Dan. i. 2 sqq.—Ver. 19. The first part of Hezekiah's reply, "Good is the word of Jehovah, which thou hast spoken," is an expression of submission to the will of the Lord, like Eli's answer in 1 Sam. iii. 18 (cf. 1 Kings ii. 38, 42);[1] the second part, which the repetition of וַיֹּאמֶר shows to have been spoken after a pause, and which was not addressed directly to Isaiah, "Is it not so (*i.e.* is it not purely goodness), if there are to be peace and truth in my days (during my life)?" is a candid acknowledgment of the grace and truth of the Lord.[2] הֲלוֹא is used, as is frequently the case, in the sense of a lively affirmation. Instead of הֲלוֹא אִם we have in Isaiah כִּי, "for there will be peace and truth," by which this clause is attached more clearly to the first declaration as a reason for it: the word of the Lord is good, for the Lord proves His goodness and truth in the fact, that He will not inflict the merited punishment in my lifetime. "Peace and truth" are connected as in Jer. xxxiii. 6. אֱמֶת does not mean continuance (Ges.), security (Knobel), but *fides*, faithfulness,—not human faithfulness, however, which preserves peace, and observes a tacit treaty (Hitzig), but the faithfulness of God, which preserves the promised grace to the humble.

Vers. 20 and 21. Close of Hezekiah's reign.—On the basin (בְּרֵכָה) and the aqueduct constructed by him, see at ch. xviii. 17.

CHAP. XXI. REIGNS OF MANASSEH AND AMON.

Vers. 1–18. Reign of Manasseh (cf. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 1–20).—Ver. 1. Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign, so that he was not born till after Hezekiah's dangerous illness (ch. xx. 1 sqq.).—Vers. 2 sqq. Having begun to reign at this early age, he did not choose his father's ways, but set up the idolatry of his father Ahab again, since the godless party in the nation, at whose head chiefs, priests, and (false) prophets stood, and who would not hearken to the law of the Lord, and in the time of Hezekiah had sought help against Assyria not from Jehovah, but from the Egyptians (Isa. xxviii. 7, 14 sqq., xxx. 9 sqq.), had obtained control of the young and inexperienced king, and had persuaded him to introduce idolatry again. On ver. 2 cf. ch. viii. 18 and xvi. 3.—Ver. 3. וַיָּשָׁב וַיִּבֶן, "he built again" the high places, which Hezekiah had destroyed (ch. xviii. 4), erected altars for Baal and an Asherah, like Ahab of Israel (1 Kings xvi. 32, 33). הָאֲשֵׁרָה is the image of Asherah mentioned in ver. 7, whereas in the Chronicles the thought is generalized by the plurals לַבְּעָלִים and הָאֲשֵׁרוֹת. To these two kinds of idolatry, the idolatrous *bamoth* and the (true) Baal- and Asherah-worship, Manasseh added as a third kind the worship of all the host of heaven, which had not occurred among the Israelites before the Assyrian era, and was probably of Assyrian or Chaldæan origin. This worship differed from the Syrophœnician star-worship, in which sun and moon were worshipped under the names of Baal and Astarte as the bearers of the male and female powers of nature, and was pure star-worship, based upon the idea of the unchangeableness of the stars in contradistinction to the perishableness of everything earthly, according to which the stars were worshipped not merely as the originators of all rise and decay in nature, but also as the leaders and regulators of sublunary things (see Movers, *Phöniz.* i. pp. 65 and 161). This star-worship was a later development of the primary star-worship of Ssabism, in which the stars were worshipped without any image, in the open air or upon the housetops, by simple contemplation, the oldest and comparatively the purest form of the deification of nature, to which the earlier Arabians and the worshippers of the sun among the Ssabians (Zabians) were addicted (cf. Delitzsch on Job xxxi. 26, 27), and which is mentioned and forbidden in Deut. iv. 19 and xvii. 3. In this later form the sun had sacred chariots and horses as among the Persians (ch. xxiii. 11), and incense was offered to the stars, with the face turned towards the east, upon altars which were built either upon housetops, as in the case of the Nabatæans (Strabo, xvi. 784), or within the limits of the temple in the two courts (cf. Ezek. viii. 16, also ch. xxi. 5, xxiii. 12, and 2 Chron. xxxiii. 5, Jer. xix. 13, Zeph. i. 5). This burning of incense took place not merely to the sun and moon, but also to the signs of the zodiac and to all the host of heaven, *i.e.* to all the stars (ch. xxiii. 5); by which we are no doubt to understand that the sun, moon, planets and other stars, were worshipped in conjunction with the zodiac, and with this were connected astrology, augury, and the casting of nativities, as in the case of the later so-called Chaldæans.[1] This star-worship is more minutely described in vers. 4 and 5. The two verses are closely connected. The וּבָנָה מִזְבְּחֹת of ver. 4 is resumed in וַיִּבֶן מזב׳ in ver. 5, and the בְּבֵית י״ of ver. 4 is more minutely defined in the בִּשְׁתֵּי חַצְרוֹת בֵּית י״ of ver. 5. "In the two courts:" not merely in the outer court, but even in the court of the priests, which was set apart for the worship of Jehovah.—Ver. 6. He also offered his son in sacrifice to Moloch, like Ahaz (ch. xvi. 3), in the valley of Benhinnom (Chron. cf. ch. xxiii. 10), and practised soothsaying and witchcraft of every kind. On עוֹנֵן וְנִחֵשׁ see Deut. xviii. 10 and Lev. xix. 26. עָשָׂה אוֹב, he made, *i.e.* appointed, put into office, a "necromancer and wise people" (cf. Lev. xix. 31 and Deut. xviii. 11).—Ver. 7. Yea, he even placed the image of Asherah in the temple, *i.e.* in the Holy Place. In the description of his idolatry, which advances *gradatim*, this is introduced as the very worst crime. According to the express declaration of the Lord to David (2 Sam. vii. 13) and Solomon (1 Kings ix. 3 compared with ch. viii. 16), the temple was to serve as the dwelling-place of His name.—Ver. 8. The word of the Lord, "I will no more make the foot of Israel to move out of the land which I gave to their fathers," refers to the promise in 2 Sam. vii. 10: "I will appoint my people a place, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and be stirred up no more," which had been fulfilled by the building of the temple as the seat of the name of the Lord, in the manner indicated in pp. 85 sqq. The lasting fulfilment of this promise, however, was made to rest upon the condition of Israel's faithful adherence to the commandments of God (cf. 1 Kings ix. 6 sqq.).—Ver. 9. This condition was not observed by the Israelites; Manasseh seduced them, so that they did more evil than the Canaanites, whom Jehovah had destroyed before them.—Vers. 10–15. The Lord therefore announced through the prophets, to the rebellious and idolatrous nation, the destruction of Jerusalem and the deliverance of Judah into the hands of its enemies; but, as is added in 2 Chron. xxxiii. 10, they paid no heed to them. The prophets who foretold this terrible judgment are not named. According to 2 Chron. xxxiii. 18, their utterances were entered in the annals of the kings. Habakkuk was probably one of them, since he (Hab. i. 5) predicted the Chaldæan judgment as a fact which excited astonishment and appeared incredible. The *Amorites* are mentioned in ver. 11 *instar omnium* as the supporters of the Canaanitish ungodliness, as in 1 Kings xxi. 26, etc.—The phrase, "that whosoever heareth it, both his ears may tingle," denotes such a judgment as has never been heard of before, and excites alarm and horror (cf. 1 Sam. iii. 11 and Jer. xix. 3). The *Keri* שֹׁמְעָהּ is a correction, to bring the *pronom. suff.* into conformity with the noun רָעָה so far as the gender is concerned, whereas in the *Chethîb* שֹׁמְעָיו the masculine suffix is used in the place of the feminine, as is frequently the case.—Ver. 13. "I stretch over Jerusalem the measure of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab." The measure (קַו) and the plummet (מִשְׁקֹלֶת, lit. a level) were applied to what was being built (Zech. i. 16), and also to what was being made level with the ground, *i.e.* completely thrown down (Amos vii. 7). From this sprang the figurative expressions, measure of desolation and plummet of devastation (Isa. xxxiv. 11).—The measure of Samaria therefore denotes the measure which was applied to the destruction of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab denotes the extermination of the royal house of Ahab. The meaning is: I shall destroy Jerusalem as I have destroyed Samaria, and exterminate its inhabitants like the house of Ahab. In the second hemistich the same thing is expressed, if possible, still more strongly: "I wipe away Jerusalem as one wipes the dish, and (having) wiped (it), turns it upon its upper side (פָּנֶיהָ)." The wiping of a dish that has been used, and the turning over of the dish wiped, so as not to leave a single drop in it, are a figurative representation of the complete destruction of Jerusalem and the utter extermination of its inhabitants.—Ver. 14. With the destruction of Jerusalem the Lord forsakes the people of His possession, and gives it up to its enemies for a prey and spoil.

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[1] "He calls that *good* in which it is right to acquiesce, as having proceeded from Him who does nothing but what is not only most just, but tempered with the greatest goodness, even when He inflicts punishment."—CLERICUS.

[2] "He praises the moderation of the divine decree, because when God, in accordance with His justice, might have brought this calamity upon him in his own person, for His mercy's sake He was willing to spare him and to put off the evil to a future day."—VITRINGA.

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[1] Movers (*Phöniz.* i. p. 65) correctly observes, that "in all the books of the Old Testament which are written before the Assyrian period there is no trace of any (?) *star-worship;* not that the Phœnician (Canaanitish) gods had not also a sidereal significance, but because this element was only a subordinate one, and the expressions, sun, moon, and stars, and all the host of heaven, which are not met with before, become for the first time common now,"—although his proofs of the difference between the Assyrian star-worship and the Phœnician and Babylonian image-worship stand greatly in need of critical sifting.

שְׁאֵרִית נַחֲלָתִי: Judah is called the remnant of the people of God's inheritance with a reference to the rejection and leading away of the ten tribes, which have already taken place. On בַּז וּמְשִׁסָּה see Isa. xlii. 22, Jer. xxx. 16.

To this announcement of the judgment there is appended in 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11 sqq. the statement, that Jehovah caused Manasseh the king to be taken prisoner by the generals of the king of Assyria and led away to Babylon in chains; and that when he humbled himself before God there, and made supplication to Him, He brought him back to Jerusalem and placed him upon his throne again; whereupon Manasseh fortified the walls of Jerusalem still further, placed garrisons in the fortified cities, removed the idol from the temple, abolished from the city the idolatrous altars erected in Jerusalem and upon the temple-mountain, restored the altar of Jehovah, and commanded the people to offer sacrifice upon it.—This incident is omitted in our book, because the conversion of Manasseh was not followed by any lasting results so far as the kingdom was concerned; the abolition of outward idolatry in Jerusalem did not lead to the conversion of the people, and after the death of Manasseh even the idolatrous abominations that had been abolished were restored by Amon.[1]—Ver. 16. Manasseh also sinned grievously by shedding innocent blood till Jerusalem was quite filled with it. פֶּה לָפֶה, from one edge to the other, see at ch. x. 21. This statement has been paraphrased by Josephus thus (*Ant.* x. 3, 1): Manasseh slew *πάντας ὁμῶς τοὺς δικαίους τοὺς ἐν τοῖς Ἑβραίοις*, and did not spare even the prophets, with the additional clause, which exaggerates the thing: *καὶ τούτων δέ τινας καθ' ἡμέραν ἀπέσφαξε, ὥστε αἵματι ῥεῖσθαι τὰ Ἱεροσόλυμα.*[2]—Vers. 17, 18. Manasseh was buried "in the garden of his house, in the garden of Uzza." "His house" cannot be the royal palace built by Solomon, because the garden is also called the garden of Uzza, evidently from the name of its former possessor. "His house" must therefore have been a summer palace belonging to Manasseh, the situation of which, however, it is impossible to determine more precisely. The arguments adduced by Thenius in support of the view that it was situated upon Ophel, opposite to Zion, are perfectly untenable. Robinson (*Pal.* i. p. 394) conjectures that the garden of Uzza was upon Zion. The name עֻזָּא (עֻזָּה) occurs again in 2 Sam. vi. 8, 1 Chron. viii. 7, Ezra ii. 49, and Neh. vii. 51.

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[1] The historical truth of these accounts, which Rosenmüller, Winer, and Hitzig called in question after the example of Gramberg, has been defended by Ewald, Bertheau, and even by Thenius; and the latest attack which has been made upon it by Graf in the *Theol. Studien u. Krit.* 1859, iii., has been met by E. Gerlach in the same magazine of 1861. For further remarks see the Commentary on the Chronicles.

[2] The widespread Jewish and Christian legend, that Manasseh put to death the prophet Isaiah, and indeed had him sawn in sunder, to which there is an allusion in Heb. xi. 37, also belongs here. (See Delitzsch, *Comm. on Isaiah*, p. 5.)

Vers. 19–26. REIGN OF AMON (cf. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 21–25).—Amon reigned only two years, and that in the spirit of his father, that is to say, worshipping all his idols. The city of Jotbah, from which his mother sprang, was, according to Jerome (in the *Onom.* s. v. Jethaba), *urbs antiqua Judææ;* but it is not further known.—Vers. 23, 24. His servants conspired against him and slew him in his palace; whereupon the people of the land, *i.e.* the population of Judah (עַם הָאָרֶץ = עַם יְהוּדָה, 2 Chron. xxvi. 1), put the conspirators to death and made *Josiah* the son of Amon king, when he was only eight years old.—Ver. 26. Amon was buried "in his grave in the garden of Uzza," *i.e.* in the grave which he had had made in the garden of Uzza by the side of his father's grave. He had probably resided in this palace of his father. יִקְבֹּר, one buried him.

CHAP. XXII. 1–XXIII. 30. REIGN OF KING JOSIAH.

After a brief account of the length and spirit of the reign of the pious Josiah (vers. 1 and 2), we have a closely connected narrative, in ver. 3–xxiii. 24, of what he did for the restoration of the true worship of Jehovah and the extermination of idolatry; and the whole of the reform effected by him is placed in the eighteenth year of his reign, because it was in this year that the book of the law was discovered, through which the reformation of worship was carried to completion. It is evident that it was the historian's intention to combine together everything that Josiah did to this end, so as to form one grand picture, from the circumstance that he has not merely placed the chronological datum, "it came to pass in the eighteenth year of king Josiah," at the beginning, but has repeated it at the close (ch. xxiii. 23). If we run over the several facts which are brought before us in this section,—the repairing of the temple (ch. xxii. 3–7); the discovery of the book of the law; the reading of the book to the king; the inquiry made of the prophetess Huldah, and her prophecy (vers. 8–20); the reading of the law to the assembled people in the temple, with the renewal of the covenant (ch. xxiii. 1–3); the eradication of idolatry not only from Jerusalem and Judah, but from Bethel also, and all the cities of Samaria (vers. 4–20); and, lastly, the passover (vers. 21–23),—there is hardly any need to remark, that all this cannot have taken place in the one eighteenth year of his reign, even if, with Usher (*Annales ad a.m.* 3381), we were to place the solemn passover at the close of the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign, which is hardly suitable, and by no means follows from the circumstance that the chronological datum, "in the eighteenth year," stands at the commencement of the complete account of the reform of worship introduced by that king. For we may clearly infer that the several details of this account are not arranged chronologically, but according to the subject-matter, and that the historian has embraced the efforts of Josiah to restore the legal worship of Jehovah, which spread over several years, under the one point of view of a discovery of the law, and therefore within the eighteenth year of his reign, from the fact that he introduces the account of the repairing of the temple (ch. xxii. 3–7) in a period by itself, and makes it subordinate to the account of the discovery of the book of the law, and indeed only mentions it in a general manner, because it led to the finding of the book of the law. It is true that the other facts are attached to one another in the narrative by *Vav consec.*; but, on a closer inspection of the several details, there cannot be any doubt whatever that the intention is not to arrange them in their chronological order. The repairing of the temple must have commenced before the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign, inasmuch as in that year, in which the incident occurred which led to the discovery of the book of the law (ch. xxii. 3–7), not only were the builders occupied with the repairs of the temple, but money had been brought by all the people to the house of God to carry on this work, and had been collected by the Levites who kept the door. Moreover, from the very nature of the case, we cannot conceive of the restoration of the temple, that had fallen to decay, without the removal of the idolatrous abominations found in the temple. And the assumption is an equally inconceivable one, that all the people entered into covenant with the Lord (ch. xxiii. 3), before any commencement had been made towards the abolition of the prevailing idolatry, or that the pious king had the book of the law read in the temple and entered into covenant with the Lord, so long as the Ashera was standing in the temple and the idolatrous altars erected by Manasseh in the courts, together with the horses and chariots dedicated to the sun. If the conclusion of a covenant in consequence of the public reading of the book of the law was to be an act in accordance with the law, the public memorials of idolatry must be destroyed at all events in the neighbourhood of the temple. And is it likely that the king, who had been so deeply moved by the curses of the law, would have undertaken so solemn a transaction in sight of the idolatrous altars and other abominations of idolatry in the house of Jehovah, and not rather have seen that this would be only a daring insult to Jehovah? These reasons are quite sufficient to prove that the extermination of idolatry had commenced before the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign, and had simply been carried out with greater zeal throughout the whole kingdom after the discovery of the book of the law.

This view of our account is simply confirmed by a comparison with the parallel history in 2 Chron. xxxiv. and xxxv. According to 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3 sqq., Josiah began to seek the God of his father David in the eighth year of his reign, when he was still a youth, that is to say, not more than sixteen years old, and in the twelfth year of his reign began to purify Judah and Jerusalem from idolatry; and, according to vers. 8 sqq., in the eighteenth year of his reign, at the purification of the land and temple, and the renovation of the temple, the book of the law was found by the high priest, and handed over to the king and read before him (vers. 8–28), after which the renewal of the covenant took place, and all the abominations of idolatry that still remained in the land were swept away (vers. 29–33), and, lastly, a solemn passover was celebrated, of which we have an elaborate account in ch. xxxv. 1–19. Consequently the account given in the Chronicles is, on the whole, arranged with greater chronological precision, although even there, after the commencement of the extermination of idolatry has been mentioned, we have a brief and comprehensive statement of all that Josiah did to accomplish that result; so that after the renewal of the covenant (ch. xxxiv. 33) we have nothing more than a passing allusion, by way of summary, to the complete abolition of the abominations of idolatry throughout the whole land.

Vers. 1 and 2. *Length and spirit of Josiah's reign.*—Josiah (for the name, see at 1 Kings xiii. 2), like Hezekiah, trode once more in the footsteps of his pious forefather David, adhering with the greatest constancy to the law of the Lord. He reigned thirty-one years. As a child he had probably received a pious training from his mother; and when he had ascended the throne, after the early death of his godless father, he was under the guidance of pious men who were faithfully devoted to the law of the Lord, and who turned his heart to the God of their fathers, as was the case with Joash in ch. xii. 3, although there is no allusion to guardianship. His mother *Jedidah*, the daughter of Adaiah, was of *Boscath*, a city in the plain of Judah, of which nothing further is known (see at Josh. xv. 39). The description of his character, "he turned not aside to the right hand and to the left," *sc.* from that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, is based upon Deut. v. 29, xvii. 11, 20, and xxviii. 14, and expresses an unwavering adherence to the law of the Lord.

Vers. 3–8. *Repairing of the temple, and discovery of the book of the law* (cf. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 8–18).—When Josiah sent Shaphan the secretary of state (סוֹפֵר, see at 2 Sam. viii. 17) into the temple, in the eighteenth year of his reign, with instructions to Hilkiah the high priest to pay to the builders the money which had been collected from the people for repairing the temple by the Levites who kept the door, Hilkiah said to Shaphan, "I have found the book of the law." Vers. 3–8 form a long period. The apodosis to וַיְהִי וגו׳, "it came to pass in the eighteenth year of king Josiah—the king had sent Shaphan," etc., does not follow till ver. 8: "that Hilkiah said," etc. The principal fact which the historian wished to relate, was the discovery of the book of the law; and the repairing of the temple is simply mentioned because it was when Shaphan was sent to Hilkiah about the payment of the money to the builders that the high priest informed the king's secretary of state of the discovery of the book of the law in the temple, and handed it over to him to take to the king. שָׁלַח הַמֶּלֶךְ, in ver. 3, forms the commencement to the minor clauses inserted within the principal clause, and subordinate to it: "the king had sent Shaphan," etc. According to 2 Chron. xxxiv. 8, the king had deputed not only Shaphan the state-secretary, but also Maaseiah the governor of the city and Joach the chancellor, because the repairing of the temple was not a private affair of the king and the high priest, but concerned the city generally, and indeed the whole kingdom. In vers. 4, 5 there follows the charge given by the king to Shaphan: "Go up to Hilkiah the high priest, that he may make up the money, . . . and hand it over to the workmen appointed over the house of Jehovah," etc. יַתֵּם, from תָּמַם, *Hiphil*, signifies to finish or set right, *i.e.* not pay out (Ges., Dietr.), but make it up for the purpose of paying out, namely, collect it from the door-keepers, count it, and bind it up in bags (see ch. xii. 11). יַתֵּם is therefore quite appropriate here, and there is no alteration of the text required. The door-keepers had probably put the money in a chest placed at the entrance, as was the case at the repairing of the temple in the time of Joash (ch. xii. 10). In ver. 5 the *Keri* יִתְּנֻהוּ is a bad alteration of the *Chethîb* יִתְּנֶה, "and give (it) into the hand," which is perfectly correct. עֹשֵׂי הַמְּלָאכָה might denote both the masters and the workmen (builders), and is therefore defined more precisely first of all by הַמֻּפְקָדִים בְּבֵית י״י, "who had the oversight at the house of Jehovah," *i.e.* the masters or inspectors of the building, and secondly by אֲשֶׁר בְּבֵית י״י, who were (occupied) at the house of Jehovah, whilst in the Chronicles it is explained by אֲשֶׁר עֹשִׂים ב׳ י׳. The *Keri* בֵּית י״י is an alteration after ver. 9, whereas the combination מֻפְקָדִים בְּבֵית is justified by the construction of הִפְקִיד *c. acc. pers.* and ב *rei* in Jer. xl. 5. The masters are the subject to וְיִתְּנוּ; they were to pay the money as it was wanted, either to the workmen, or for the purchase of materials for repairing the dilapidations, as is more precisely defined in ver. 6. Compare ch. xii. 12, 13; and for ver. 7 compare ch. xii. 16. The names of the masters or inspectors are given in 2 Chron. xxxiv. 12.—The execution of the king's command is not specially mentioned, that the parenthesis may not be spun out any further.—Ver. 8. Hilkiah the high priest (cf. 1 Chron. v. 39) said, "I have found the book of the law in the house of Jehovah." סֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה, *the* book of the law (not *a* law-book or a roll of laws), cannot mean anything else, either grammatically or historically, than the Mosaic book of the law (the Pentateuch), which is so designated, as is generally admitted, in the Chronicles, and the books of Ezra and Nehemiah.[1] The finding of the book of the law in the temple presupposes that the copy deposited there had come to light. But it by no means follows from this, that before its discovery there were no copies in the hands of the priests and prophets. The book of the law that was found was simply the temple copy,[2] deposited, according to Deut. xxxi. 26, by the side of the ark of the covenant, which had been lost under the idolatrous kings Manasseh and Amon, and came to light again now that the temple was being repaired. We cannot learn, either from the account before us, or from the words of the Chronicles (ch. xxxiv. 14), "when they were taking out the money brought into the house of Jehovah, Hilkiah found the book of the law of the Lord," in what part of the temple it had hitherto lain; and this is of no importance so far as the principal object of the history is concerned. Even the words of the Chronicles simply point out the occasion on which the book was discovered, and do not affirm that it had been lying in one of the treasure-chambers of the temple, as Josephus says. The expression וַיִּקְרָאֵהוּ does not imply that Shaphan read the whole book through immediately.

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[1] Thenius has correctly observed, that "the expression shows very clearly, that the allusion is to something already known, not to anything that had come to light for the first time;" but he is greatly mistaken when, notwithstanding this, he supposes that what we are to understand by this is merely a collection of the commandments and ordinances of Moses, which had been worked up in the Pentateuch, and more especially in Deuteronomy. For there is not the smallest proof whatever that any such collection of commandments and ordinances of Moses, or, as Bertheau supposes, the collection of Mosaic law contained in the three middle books of the Pentateuch, or Deuteronomy ch. i.-xxviii. (according to Vaihinger, Reuss, and others), was ever called ספר התורה, or that any such portions had had an independent existence, and had been deposited in the temple. These hypotheses are simply bound up with the attacks made upon the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, and ought to be given up, since De Wette, the great leader of the attack upon the genuineness of the Pentateuch, in § 162*a* of the later editions of his *Introduction to the Old Testament*, admits that the account before us contains the first certain trace of the existence of our present Pentateuch. The only loophole left to modern criticism, therefore, is that Hilkiah forged the book of the law discovered by him under the name of Moses,—a conclusion which can only be arrived at by distorting the words of the text in the most arbitrary manner, turning "find" into "forge," but which is obliged either to ignore or forcibly to set aside all the historical evidence of the previous existence of the whole of the Pentateuch, including Deuteronomy.

[3] Whether the original written by Moses' own hand, as Grotius inferred from the ביד משה of the Chronicles, or a later copy of this, is a very superfluous question; for, as Hävernick says, "even in the latter case it was to be regarded just in the same light as the autograph, having just the same claims, since the temple repaired by Josiah was the temple of Solomon still."

Vers. 9–14. *The reading of the book of the law to the king, and the inquiry made of the prophetess Huldah concerning it.*—Vers. 9, 10. When Shaphan informed the king of the execution of his command, he also told him that Hilkiah had given him a book, and read it to the king. הֵשִׁיב דָּבָר, to bring an answer, to give a report as to a commission that has been received. הִתִּיכוּ, they poured out the money, *i.e.* out of the chest in which it was collected, into bags. וַיִּקְרָאֵהוּ, "he read it to the king," is simplified in the Chronicles (ver. 18) by יִקְרָא בוֹ, "he read therein." That יקראהו does not signify that the whole was read, is evident from a comparison of ch. xxiii. 2, where the reading of the whole is expressed by כָּל־דִּבְרֵי ס׳. Which passages or sections Shaphan read by himself (ver. 8), and which he read to the king, it is impossible to determine exactly. To the king he most likely read, among other things, the threats and curses of the law against those who transgressed it (Deut. xxviii.), and possibly also Lev. xxvi., because the reading made such an impression upon him, that in his anguish of soul he rent his clothes. Nor is it possible to decide anything with certainty, as to whether the king had hitherto been altogether unacquainted with the book of the law, and had merely a traditional knowledge of the law itself, or whether he had already had a copy of the law, but had not yet read it through, or had not read it with proper attention, which accounted for the passages that were read to him now making so deep and alarming an impression upon him. It is a well-known experience, that even books which have been read may, under peculiar circumstances, produce an impression such as has not been made before. But in all probability Josiah had not had in his possession any copy of the law, or even read it till now; although the thorough acquaintance with the law, which all the prophets display, places the existence of the Pentateuch in prophetical circles beyond the reach of doubt.—Ver. 11. In his alarm at the words of the book of the law that had been read to him, Josiah rent his clothes, and sent a deputation to the prophetess Huldah, to make inquiry of Jehovah through her concerning the things which he had heard from the law. The deputation consisted of the high priest Hilkiah, Ahikam the supporter of Jeremiah (Jer. xxvi. 24) and the father of

Gedaliah the governor (ch. xxv. 22; Jer. xxxix. 14, etc.), Achbor the son of Michaiah, Shaphan the state-secretary (ver. 3), and Asahiah the servant (*i.e.* an officer) of the king.—Ver. 13. From the commission, " Inquire ye of Jehovah for me and for the people and for all Judah (*i.e.* the whole kingdom) concerning the words of this book of the law that has been found, for great is the wrath of the Lord which has been kindled against us, because our fathers have not heard . . .," we may infer that the curses of the law upon the despisers of the commandments of God in Lev. xxvi., Deut. xxviii., and other passages, had been read to the king. דָּרַשׁ אֶת־יי׳ means to inquire the will of the Lord, what He has determined concerning the king, his people, and the kingdom. שָׁמַע עַל signifies here to hearken to anything, to observe it, for which אֶל is used elsewhere. כָּתַב עַל, to prescribe for performance. עָלֵינוּ, " prescribed for *us*," is quite appropriate, since the law was not only given to the fathers to obey, but also to the existing generation,—a fact which Thenius has overlooked with his conjecture עָלָיו. To render the king's alarm and his fear of severe judgments from God intelligible, there is no need for the far-fetched and extremely precarious hypothesis, that just at that time the Scythians had invaded and devastated the land.—Ver. 14. Nothing further is known of the prophetess *Huldah* than what is mentioned here. All that we can infer from the fact that the king sent to her is, that she was highly distinguished on account of her prophetical gifts, and that none of the prophets of renown, such as Jeremiah and Zephaniah, were at that time in Jerusalem. Her father *Shallum* was *keeper of the clothes, i.e.* superintendent over either the priests' dresses that were kept in the temple (according to the Rabbins and Wits. *de proph.* in his *Miscell. ss.* i. p. 356, ed. 3), or the king's wardrobe. The names of his ancestors תִּקְוָה and חַרְחַס are written תּוֹקְהַת and חַסְרָה in the Chronicles. Huldah lived at Jerusalem בַּמִּשְׁנֶה, " in the second part" or district of the city, *i.e.* in the lower city, upon the hill Ἄκρα (Rob. *Pal.* i. p. 391), which is called הַמִּשְׁנֶה in Zeph. i. 10, and הָעִיר מִשְׁנֶה in Neh. xi. 9, and ἄλλη πόλις in Joseph. *Ant.* xv. 11, 5.

Vers. 15–20. *The reply of Huldah the prophetess.*—Huldah confirmed the fear expressed by Josiah, that the wrath of the Lord was kindled against Jerusalem and its inhabitants on account of their idolatry, and proclaimed first of all (vers. 16, 17), that the Lord would bring upon Jerusalem and its inhabitants all the punishments with which the rebellious and idolaters are threatened in the book of the law; and secondly (vers. 18–20), to the king himself, that on account of his sincere repentance and humiliation in the sight of God, he would not live to see the predicted calamities, but would be gathered to his fathers in peace. The first part of her announcement applies "to the man who has sent you to me" (ver. 15), the second "to the king of Judah, who has sent to inquire of the Lord" (ver. 18). "The man" who had sent to her was indeed also the king; but Huldah intentionally made use of the general expression "the man," etc., to indicate that the word announced to him applied not merely to the king, but to every one who would hearken to the word, whereas the second portion of her reply had reference to the king alone. הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה, in vers. 16, 19, and 20, is Jerusalem as the capital of the kingdom. In ver. 16, כָּל־דִּבְרֵי הַסֵּפֶר is an explanatory apposition to רָעָה. Ver. 17. "With all the work of their hands," *i.e.* with the idols which they have made for themselves (cf. 1 Kings xvi. 7). The last clause in ver. 18, "the words which thou hast heard," is not to be connected with the preceding one, "thus saith the Lord," and עַל or לְ to be supplied; but it belongs to the following sentence, and is placed at the head absolutely: as for the words, which thou hast heard—because thy heart has become soft, *i.e.* in despair at the punishment with which the sinners are threatened (cf. Deut. xx. 3; Isa. vii. 4), and thou hast humbled thyself, when thou didst hear, etc.; therefore, behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, etc. לִהְיוֹת לְשַׁמָּה, "that they (the city and inhabitants) may become a desolation and curse." These words, which are often used by the prophets, but which are not found connected like this except in Jer. xliv. 22, rest upon Lev. xxvi. and Deut. xxviii., and show that these passages had been read to the king out of the book of the law.—Ver. 20. To gather to his fathers means merely to let him die, and is generally applied to a peaceful death upon a sick-bed, like the synonymous phrase, to lie with one's fathers; but it is also applied to a violent death by being slain in battle (1 Kings xxii. 40 and 34), so that there is no difficulty in reconciling this comforting assurance with the slaying of Josiah in battle (ch. xxiii. 29). בְּשָׁלוֹם, in peace, *i.e.* without living to witness the devastation of Jerusalem, as is evident from the words, "thine eyes will not see," etc.

Ch. xxiii. 1–30. Instead of resting content with the fact that he was promised deliverance from the approaching judgment, Josiah did everything that was in his power to lead the whole nation to true conversion to the Lord, and thereby avert as far as possible the threatened curse of rejection, since the Lord in His word had promised forgiveness and mercy to the penitent. He therefore gathered together the elders of the nation, and went with them, with the priests and prophets and the assembled people, into the temple, and there had the book of the law read to those who were assembled, and concluded a covenant with the Lord, into which the people also entered. After this he had all the remnants of idolatry eradicated, not only in Jerusalem and Judah, but also in Bethel and the other cities of Samaria, and directed the people to strengthen themselves in their covenant fidelity towards the Lord by the celebration of a solemn passover.—Vers. 1–3. *Reading of the law in the temple, and renewal of the covenant* (cf. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 29–32). Beside the priests, Josiah also gathered together the prophets, including perhaps Jeremiah and Zedekiah, that he might carry out the solemn conclusion of the covenant with their co-operation, and, as is evident from Jer. i.–xi., that they might then undertake the task, by their impressive preaching in Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, of making the people conscious of the earnestness of the covenant duties which they had so recently undertaken (see Oehler in Herzog's *Cycl.*). Instead of the prophets, *the* Levites are mentioned in the Chronicles, probably only because the Levites are mentioned along with the priests in other cases of a similar kind. וַיִּקְרָא, he read, *i.e.* had it read; for the duty of reading the law in the temple devolved upon the priests as the keepers of the law (Deut. xxxi. 9 sqq.).—Ver. 3. The king stood עַל הָעַמּוּד, as in ch. xi. 14. For וַיִּכְרֹת וגו׳ see ch. xi. 17. לָלֶכֶת, *i.e.* he bound himself solemnly to walk after the Lord, that is to say, in his walk to follow the Lord and keep His commandments (see at 1 Kings ii. 3).—וַיַּעֲמוֹד . . . בַּבְּרִית, all the people entered into the covenant (Luther and others); not *perstitit*, stood firm, continued in the covenant (Maurer, Ges.), which would be at variance with Jer. xi. 9, 10, xxv. 3 sqq., and other utterances of the prophets.

Vers. 4–20. *The eradication of idolatry.*—According to 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3–7, this had already begun, and was simply continued and carried to completion after the renewal of the covenant.—Vers. 4-14. *In Jerusalem and Judah.* Ver. 4. The king commanded the high priest and the other priests, and the Levites who kept the door, to remove from the temple everything that had been made for Baal and Asherah, and to burn it in the valley of Kidron. כֹּהֲנֵי הַמִּשְׁנֶה, *sacerdotes secundi ordinis* (Vulg., Luth., etc.), are the common priests as distinguished from הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל, the high priest. The Rabbins are wrong in their explanation *vicarii summi sacerdotis*, according to which Thenius would alter the text and read כֹּהֵן for כֹּהֲנֵי. שֹׁמְרֵי הַסַּף, the keepers of the threshold, are the Levites whose duty it was to watch the temple, as in ch. xxii. 4 (cf. 1 Chron. xxiii. 5). כָּל־הַכֵּלִים (*alles Zeug*, Luth.), *i.e.* all the apparatus, consisting of altars, idols, and other things, that had been provided for the worship of Baal and Astarte. Josiah had these things burned, according to the law in Deut. vii. 25, and that outside Jerusalem in the fields of the Kidron valley. The שַׁדְמוֹת קִדְרוֹן (fields of Kidron) are probably to be sought for to the north-east of Jerusalem, where the Kidron valley is broader than between the city and the Mount of Olives, and spreads out into a basin of considerable size, which is now cultivated and contains plantations of olive and other fruit-trees (Rob. *Pal.* i. p. 405). "And he had their dust carried to Bethel," *i.e.* the ashes of the wooden objects which were burned, and the dust of those of stone and metal which were ground to powder, to defile the idolatrous place of worship at Bethel as the chief seat of idolatry and false worship.—Ver. 5. "He abolished the high priests." כְּמָרִים are also mentioned in Hos. x. 5 and Zeph. i. 4: they were not idolatrous priests or prophets of Baal, but priests whom the kings of Judah had appointed to offer incense upon the altars of the high places; for they are distinguished from the idolatrous priests, or those who burnt incense to Baal, the sun, etc. In Hos. x. 5 the priests appointed in connection with the golden calf at Bethel are called כמרים; and in Zeph. i. 4 the כמרים are not exclusively idolatrous priests, but such as did service sometimes for Jehovah, who had been degraded into a Baal, and sometimes to actual idols. Now as כֹּהֲנִים who burnt incense upon high places are also mentioned in ver. 8, we must understand by the כמרים non-Levitical priests, and by the כהנים in ver. 8 Levitical priests who were devoted to the worship on the high places. The primary signification of כֹּמֶר is disputed. In Syriac the word signifies the priest, in Hebrew spurious priests, probably from

כְּמָר in the sense of to bring together, or complete, as the performers of sacrifice, like ἔρδων, the sacrificer (Dietr.); whereas the connection suggested by Hitzig (on Zeph.) with كفر, to be unbelieving, in the opposite sense of the religious, is very far-fetched, and does not answer either to the Hebrew or the Syriac use of the word.[1] The singular וַיְקַטֵּר is striking, inasmuch as if the *imperf. c. Vav rel.* were a continuation of נָתְנוּ, we should expect the plural, "and who had burnt incense," as it is given in the Chaldee. The LXX., Vulg., and Syr. have rendered לְקַטֵּר, from which וַיְקַטֵּר has probably arisen by a mistake in copying. In the following clause, "and those who had burnt incense to Baal, to the sun and to the moon," etc., *Baal* is mentioned as the deity worshipped in the sun, the moon, and the stars (see at ch. xxi. 3). מַזָּלוֹת, synonymous with מַזָּרוֹת in Job xxxviii. 32, does not mean the twenty-eight *naxatra,* or Indian stations of the moon,[2] but the twelve signs or constellations of the zodiac, which were regarded by the Arabs as *menâzil, i.e.* station-houses, in which the sun took up its abode in succession when describing the circuit of the year (cf. Ges. *Thes.* p. 869, and Delitzsch on Job xxxviii. 32).—Ver. 6. The image of Asherah (הָאֲשֵׁרָה = פֶּסֶל הָא׳, ch. xxi. 3, 7), which Manasseh placed in the temple and then removed after his return from Babylon (2 Chron. xxxiii. 15), but which Amon had replaced, Josiah ordered to be burned and ground to powder in the valley of Kidron, and the dust to be thrown upon the graves of the common people. וַיָּדֶק, from דָּקַק, to make fine, to crush, refers to the metal covering of the image (see at Ex. xxxii. 10). Asa had already had an idol burned in the Kidron valley (1 Kings xv. 13), and Hezekiah had ordered the idolatrous abominations to be taken out of the city and carried thither (2 Chron. xxix. 16); so that the valley had already been defiled. There was a burial-place there for בְּנֵי הָעָם, *i.e.* the common people (cf. Jer. xxvi. 23), who had no graves of their own, just as at the present day the burial-ground of the Jews" there lies to the north of *Kefr Silwân.* Josiah ordered the ashes to be cast upon these graves, probably in order to defile them as the graves of idolaters.—Ver. 7. בָּתֵּי הַקְּדֵשִׁים, the houses (places of abode) of the paramours (for הקדשים see at 1 Kings xiv. 24), were probably only tents or huts, which were erected in the court of the temple for the paramours to dwell in, and in which there were also women who wove tent-temples (בָּתִּים) for Asherah (see at ch. xvii. 30).[1]—Ver. 8. All the (Levitical) priests he sent for from the cities of Judah to Jerusalem, and defiled the altars of the high places, upon which they had offered incense, from Geba to Beersheba, *i.e.* throughout the whole kingdom. *Geba,* the present *Jeba,* about three hours to the north of Jerusalem (see at Josh. xviii. 24), was the northern frontier of the kingdom of Judah, and *Beersheba* (*Bir-seba:* see the Comm. on Gen. xxi. 31) the southern frontier of Canaan. It is evident from ver. 9 that כֹּהֲנִים are Levitical priests. He ordered them to come to Jerusalem, that they might not carry on illegal worship any longer in the cities of Judah. He then commanded that the unlawful high places should be defiled throughout the whole land, for the purpose of suppressing this worship altogether. He also destroyed "the altars of the high places at the gates, (both that) which was at the entrance of the gate of Joshua the governor of the city, (and also that) which was at the left of every one (entering) by the city gate." The two clauses beginning with אֲשֶׁר contain a more precise description of בָּמוֹת הַשְּׁעָרִים. The gate of Joshua the governor of the city is not mentioned anywhere else, but it was probably near to his home, *i.e.* near the citadel of the city; but whether it was the future gate of *Gennath,* as Thenius supposes, or some other, it is impossible to determine. This also applies to the opinion that שַׁעַר הָעִיר is the valley gate or Joppa gate (Thenius) as being the gate of greatest traffic; for the traffic through the northern or Ephraim gate was certainly not less. עַל־שְׂמֹאול אִישׁ, at the left of every one, *sc.* going into the city.—Ver. 9.

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[1] In any case the derivation from כמר, to be black (Ges. *Thes.* p. 693), and the explanation given by Fürst from *vi occultandi magicasque, h. e. arcanas et reconditas artes exercendi,* and others given in Iken's *Dissertatt. theol. philol.* i. diss. 12, are quite untenable.

[2] According to A. Weber, *Die vedischen Nachrichten von den naxatra,* in the *Abhandlungen der Berl. Acad. d. Wiss.* 1860 and 1861. Compare, on the other hand, Steinschneider, *Hebr. Bibliographie,* 1861, No. 22, pp. 93, 94; his article in the *Deutsch. morgld. Zeitschrift,* 1864, p. 118 sqq.

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[1] On this worship Movers has the following among other remarks (*Phön.* i. p. 686): "The mutilated Gallus (קדש) fancies that he is a woman: *negant se viros esse . . . mulieres se volunt credi* (Firmic.). He lives in close intimacy with the women, and they again are drawn towards the Galli by peculiar affection." He also expresses a conjecture "that the women of Jerusalem gave themselves up in honour of the goddess in the tents of the Galli which were pitched in the temple circle, on which account the מחיר כלב went to the temple treasury."

"Only the priests of the high places did not sacrifice, ... but ate unleavened bread in the midst of their brethren." The אַךְ is connected with ver. 8: Josiah did not allow the priests, whom he had brought out of the cities of Judah to Jerusalem, to offer sacrifice upon the altar of Jehovah in the temple, *i.e.* to perform the sacrificial service of the law, though he did allow them "to eat that which was unleavened," *i.e.* to eat of the sacred altar-gifts intended for the priests (Lev. vi. 9, 10 and 22); only they were not allowed to consume this at a holy place, but simply in the midst of their brethren, *i.e.* at home in the family. They were thus placed on a par with priests who were rendered incapable of service on account of a bodily defect (Lev. xxi. 17-22).—Ver. 10. He also defiled the place of sacrifice in the valley of Benhinnom, for the purpose of exterminating the worship of Moloch. Moloch's place of sacrifice is called הַתֹּפֶת, as an object of abhorrence, or one to be spat at (תֹּפֶת: Job xvii. 6), from תּוּף, to spit, or spit out (cf. Roediger in Ges. *thes.* p. 1497, where the other explanations are exploded).[1] On the valley *Bne* or *Ben-Hinnom*, at the south side of Mount Zion, see at Josh. xv. 8.—Ver. 11. He cleared away the horses dedicated to the sun, and burned up the chariots of the sun. As the horses were only cleared away (וַיַּשְׁבֵּת), whereas the chariots were burned, we have not to think of images of horses (Selden, *de Diis Syr.* ii. 8), but of living horses, which were given to the sun, *i.e.* kept for the worship of the sun. Horses were regarded as sacred to the sun by many nations, viz. the Armenians, Persians, Massagetæ, Ethiopians, and Greeks, and were sacrificed to it (for proofs see Bochart, *Hieroz.* i. lib. ii. c. 10); and there is no doubt that the Israelites received this worship first of all from Upper Asia, along with the actual sun-worship, possibly through the Assyrians. "The kings of Judah" are Ahaz, Manasseh, and Amon. These horses were hardly kept to be offered to the sun in sacrifice (Bochart and others), but, as we must infer from the "chariots of the sun," were used for processions in connection with the worship of the sun, probably, according to the unanimous opinion of the Rabbins, to drive and meet the rising sun. The definition מְבֹּא בֵּית י״, "from the coming into the house of Jehovah," *i.e.* near the entrance into the temple, is dependent upon נָתְנוּ, "they had given (placed) the horses of the sun near the temple entrance," אֶל־לִשְׁכַּת, "in the cell of Nethanmelech." אֶל־ does not mean *at* the cell, *i.e.* in the stable by the cell (Thenius), because the ellipsis is too harsh, and the cells built in the court of the temple were intended not merely as dwelling-places for the priests and persons engaged in the service, but also as a depôt for the provisions and vessels belonging to the temple (Neh. x. 38 sqq.; 1 Chron. ix. 26). One of these depôts was arranged and used as a stable for the sacred horses. This cell, which derived its name from Nethanmelech, a chamberlain (סָרִים), of whom nothing further is known, possibly the builder or founder of it, was בַּפַּרְוָרִים, in the *Pharvars*. פַּרְוָרִים, the plural of פַּרְוָר, is no doubt identical with פַּרְבָּר in 1 Chron. xxvi. 18. This was the name given to a building at the western or hinder side of the outer temple-court by the gate *Shalleket* at the ascending road, *i.e.* the road which led up from the city standing in the west into the court of the temple (1 Chron. xxvi. 16 and 18). The meaning of the word פרור is uncertain. Gesenius (*thes.* p. 1123) explains it by *porticus*, after the Persian فروار, summer-house, an open kiosk. Böttcher (*Proben*, p. 347), on the other hand, supposes it to be "a separate spot resembling a suburb," because in the Talmud פרורין signifies *suburbia, loca urbi vicinia.*—Ver. 12. The altars built upon the roof of the *aliyah* of Ahaz were dedicated to the host of heaven (Zeph. i. 5; Jer. xix. 13, xxxii. 29), and certainly built by Ahaz; and inasmuch as Hezekiah had undoubtedly removed them when he reformed the worship, they had been restored by Manasseh and Amon, so that by "the kings of Judah" we are to understand these three kings as in ver. 11. We are unable to determine where the עֲלִיָּה, the upper chamber, of Ahaz really was. But since the things spoken of both before and afterwards are the objects of idolatry found in the temple, this *aliyah* was probably also an upper room of one of the buildings in the court of the temple (Thenius), possibly at the gate, which Ahaz had built when he removed the outer entrance of the king into the temple (ch. xvi. 18), since, according to Jer. xxxv. 4, the buildings at the gate had upper stories. The altars built by Manasseh in the two courts of the temple (see ch. xxi. 5) Josiah destroyed,

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[1] Jerome (on Jer. vii. 31) says: THOPHET, *quæ est in valle filiorum Enom, illum locum significat, qui Siloë fontibus irrigatur et est amœnus atque nemorosus, hodieque hortorum præbet delicias.* From the name *Gehinnom* the Rabbins formed the name Γέεννα, *Gehenna* (Matt. v. 22, 29, etc.), with special reference to the children burnt here to Moloch, to signify hell and hell-fire.

וַיָּרָץ מִשָּׁם, "and crushed them to powder from thence," and cast their dust into the Kidron valley. יָרָץ, not from רוּץ, to run, but from רָצַץ, to pound or crush to pieces. The alteration proposed by Thenius into וַיָּרֶץ, he caused to run and threw = he had them removed with all speed, is not only arbitrary, but unsuitable, because it is impossible to see why Josiah should merely have hurried the clearing away of the dust of these altars, whereas רָצַץ, to pound or grind to powder, was not superfluous after נִתַּץ, to destroy, but really necessary, if the dust was to be thrown into the Kidron. וַיָּרָץ is substantially equivalent to וַיָּדֶק in ver. 6.—Vers. 13, 14. The places of sacrifice built by Solomon upon the southern height of the Mount of Olives (see at 1 Kings xi. 7) Josiah defiled, reducing to ruins the monuments, cutting down the Asherah idols, and filling their places with human bones, which polluted a place, according to Num. xix. 16. Ver. 14 gives a more precise definition of טִמֵּא in ver. 13 in the form of a simple addition (with *Vav cop.*). הַר־הַמַּשְׁחִית, mountain of destruction (not *unctionis* = הַמִּשְׁחָה, Rashi and Cler.), is the southern peak of the Mount of Olives, called in the tradition of the Church *mons offensionis* or *scandali* (see at 1 Kings xi. 7). For מַצֵּבוֹת and אֲשֵׁרִים see at 1 Kings xiv. 23. מְקוֹמָם are the places where the *Mazzeboth* and *Asherim* stood by the altars that were dedicated to Baal and Astarte, so that by defiling them the altar-places were also defiled.

Vers. 15–20. *Extermination of idolatry in Bethel and the cities of Samaria.*—In order to suppress idolatry as far as possible, Josiah did not rest satisfied with the extermination of it in his own kingdom Judah, but also destroyed the temples of the high places and altars and idols in the land of the former kingdom of the ten tribes, slew all the priests of the high places that were there, and burned their bones upon the high places destroyed, in order to defile the ground. The warrant for this is not to be found, as Hess supposes, in the fact that Josiah, as vassal of the king of Assyria, had a certain limited power over these districts, and may have looked upon them as being in a certain sense his own territority, a power which the Assyrians may have allowed him the more readily, because they were sure of his fidelity in relation to Egypt. For we cannot infer that Josiah was a vassal of the Assyrians from the imprisonment and release of Manasseh by the king of Assyria, nor is there any historical evidence whatever to prove it. The only reason that can have induced Josiah to do this, must have been that after the dissolution of the kingdom of the ten tribes he regarded himself as the king of the whole of the covenant-nation, and availed himself of the approaching or existing dissolution of the Assyian empire to secure the friendship of the Israelites who were left behind in the kingdom of the ten tribes, to reconcile them to his government, and to win them over to his attempt to reform; and there is no necessity whatever to assume, as Thenius does, that he asked permission to do so of the newly arisen ruler Nabopolassar. For against this assumption may be adduced not only the improbability that Nabopolassar would give him any such permission, but still more the circumstance that at a still earlier period, even before Nabopolassar became king of Babylon, Josiah had had taxes collected of the inhabitants of the kingdom of Israel for the repairing of the temple (2 Chron. xxxiv. 9), from which we may see that the Israelites who were left behind in the land were favourably disposed towards his reforms, and were inclined to attach themselves in religious matters to Judah (just as, indeed, even the Samaritans were willing after the captivity to take part in the building of the temple, Ezra iv. 2 sqq.), which the Assyrians at that time were no longer in a condition to prevent.—Ver. 15. "Also the altar at Bethel, the high place which Jeroboam had made—this altar also and the high place he destroyed." It is grammatically impossible to take הַבָּמָה as an accusative of place (Thenius); it is in apposition to הַמִּזְבֵּחַ, serving to define it more precisely: the altar at Bethel, namely the high place; for which we have afterwards the altar and the high place. By the appositional הַבָּמָה the altar at Bethel is described as an illegal place of worship. "He burned the בָּמָה," *i.e.* the buildings of this sanctuary, ground to powder everything that was made of stone or metal, *i.e.* both the altar and the idol there. This is implied in what follows: "and burned Asherah," *i.e.* a wooden idol of Astarte found there, according to which there would no doubt be also an idol of Baal, a מַצֵּבָה of stone. The golden calf, which had formerly been set up at Bethel, may, as Hos. x. 5, 6 seems to imply, have been removed by the Assyrians, and, after the settlement of heathen colonists in the land, have been supplanted by idols of Baal and Astarte (cf. ch. xvii. 29).—Vers. 16 sqq. In order to desecrate this idolatrous site for all time, Josiah had human bones taken out of the graves that were to be found upon the mountain, and burned upon the altar, whereby the prophecy uttered in the reign of Jeroboam by the prophet who came out of Judah concerning this idolatrous place of worship was fulfilled; but he spared the tomb of that prophet himself (cf. 1 Kings xiii. 26–32). The mountain upon which Josiah saw the graves was a mountain at Bethel, which was visible from the *bamah* destroyed. צִיּוּן, a sepulchral monument, probably a stone erected upon the grave. וַיְמַלְּטוּ: "so they rescued (from burning) his bones (the bones of the prophet who had come from Judah), together with the bones of the prophet who had come from Samaria," *i.e.* of the old prophet who sprang from the kingdom of the ten tribes and had come to Bethel (1 Kings xiii. 11). בָּא מִשֹּׁמְרוֹן in antithesis to בָּא מִיהוּדָה denotes simply descent from the land of Samaria.[1]—Vers. 19, 20. All the houses of the high places that were in the (other) cities of Samaria Josiah also destroyed in the same way as that at Bethel, and offered up the priests of the high places upon the altars, *i.e.* slew them upon the altars on which they had offered sacrifice, and burned men's bones upon them (the altars) to defile them. The severity of the procedure towards these priests of the high places, as contrasted with the manner in which the priests of the high places in Judah were treated (vers. 8 and 9), may be explained partly from the fact that the Israelitish priests of the high places were not Levitical priests, but chiefly from the fact that they were really idolatrous priests.

Vers. 21–23. *The passover* is very briefly noticed in our account, and is described as such an one as had not taken place since the days of the judges. Ver. 21 simply mentions the appointment of this festival on the part of the king, and the execution of the king's command has to be supplied. Ver. 22 contains a remark concerning the character of the passover. In 2 Chron. xxxv. 1–19 we have a very elaborate description of it. What distinguished this passover above every other was, (1) that "all the nation," not merely Judah and Benjamin, but also the remnant of the ten tribes, took part in it, or, as it is expressed in 2 Chron. xxxv. 18, "all Judah and Israel;" (2) that it was kept in strict accordance with the precepts of the Mosaic book of the law, whereas in the passover instituted by Hezekiah there were necessarily many points of deviation from the precepts of the law, more especially in the fact that the feast had to be transferred from the first month, which was the legal time, to the second month, because the priests had not yet purified themselves in sufficient numbers and the people had not yet gathered together at Jerusalem, and also that even then a number of the people had inevitably been allowed to eat the passover without the previous purification required by the law (2 Chron. xxx. 2, 3, 17-20). This is implied in the words, "for there was not holden such a passover since the days of the judges and all the kings of Israel and Judah." That this remark does not preclude the holding of earlier passovers, as Thenius follows De Wette in supposing, without taking any notice of the refutations of this opinion, was correctly maintained by the earlier commentators. Thus Clericus observes: "I should have supposed that what the sacred writer meant to say was, that during the times of the kings no passover had ever been kept *so strictly by every one, according to all the Mosaic laws.* Before this, even under the pious kings, they seem to have followed custom rather than the very words of the law; and since this was the case, many things were necessarily changed and neglected." Instead of "since the days of the judges who judged Israel," we find in 2 Chron. xxxv. 18, "since the days of Samuel the prophet," who is well known to have closed the period of the judges.

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[1] Vers. 16–18 are neither an interpolation of the editor, *i.e.* of the author of our books of Kings (Staehelin), nor an interpolation from a supplement to the account in 1 Kings xiii. 1–32 (Thenius). The correspondence between the וגם in ver. 15 and the וגם in ver. 18 does not require this assumption; and the pretended discrepancy, that after Josiah had already reduced the altar to ruins (ver. 15) he could not possibly defile it by burning human bones upon it (ver. 16), is removed by the very natural solution, that המזבח in ver. 16 does not mean the altar itself, but the site of the altar that had been destroyed.

Vers. 24-30. *Conclusion of Josiah's reign.*—Ver. 24. As Josiah had the passover kept in perfect accordance with the precepts of the law, so did he also exterminate the necromancers, the teraphim and all the abominations of idolatry, throughout all Judah and Jerusalem, to set up the words of the law in the book of the law that had been found, *i.e.* to carry them out and bring them into force. For הָאֹבוֹת and הַיִּדְּעֹנִים see at ch. xxi. 6. תְּרָפִים, *penates*, domestic gods, which were worshipped as the authors of earthly prosperity and as oracular deities (see at Gen. xxxi. 19). גִּלֻּלִים and שִׁקֻּצִים, connected together, as in Deut. xxix. 16, as a contemptuous description of idols in general.—In ver. 25 the account of the efforts made by Josiah to restore the true worship of Jehovah closes with a general verdict concerning his true piety. See the remarks on this point at ch. xviii. 5. He turned to Jehovah with all his heart, etc.: there is an evident allusion here to Deut. vi. 5. Compare with this the sentence of the prophet Jeremiah concerning his reign (Jer. xxii. 15, 16). —Ver. 26. Nevertheless the Lord turned not from the great fierceness of His wrath, wherewith He had burned against Judah on account of all the provocations "with which Manasseh had provoked Him." With this sentence, in which אַךְ לֹא שָׁב forms an unmistakeable word-play upon אֲשֶׁר שָׁב אֶל יי׳, the historian introduces the account not merely of the end of Josiah's reign, but also of the destruction of the kingdom of Judah. Manasseh is mentioned here and at ch. xxiv. 3 and Jer. xv. 4 as the person who, by his idolatry and his unrighteousness, with which he provoked God to anger, had brought upon Judah and Jerusalem the unavoidable judgment of rejection. It is true that Josiah had exterminated outward and gross idolatry throughout the land by his sincere conversion to the Lord, and by his zeal for the restoration of the lawful worship of Jehovah, and had persuaded the people to enter into covenant with its God once more; but a thorough conversion of the people to the Lord he had not been able to effect. For, as Clericus has correctly observed, "although the king was most religious, and the people obeyed him through fear, yet for all that the mind of the people was not changed, as is evident enough from the reproaches of Jeremiah, Zephaniah, and other prophets, who prophesied about that time and a little after." With regard to this point compare especially the first ten chapters of Jeremiah, which contain a *resumé* of his labours in the reign of Josiah, and bear witness to the deep inward apostasy of the people from the Lord, not only before and during Josiah's reform of worship, but also afterwards. As the Holy One of Israel, therefore, God could not forgive any more, but was obliged to bring upon the people and kingdom, after the death of Josiah, the judgment already foretold to Manasseh himself (ch. xxi. 12 sqq.).—Ver. 27. The Lord said: I will also put away Judah (in the same manner as Israel: cf. ch. xvii. 20, 23) from my face, etc. וַיֹּאמֶר expresses the divine decree, which was announced to the people by the prophets, especially Jeremiah and Zephaniah.—Vers. 29 and 30: compare 2 Chron. xxxv. 20–24. The predicted catastrophe was brought to pass by the expedition of Necho the king of Egypt against Assyria. "In his days (*i.e.* towards the end of Josiah's reign) Pharaoh *Necho* the king of Egypt went up against the king of Asshur to the river Euphrates." *Necho* (נְכֹה or נְכוֹ, 2 Chron. xxxv. 20, Jer. xlvi. 2 ; called *Νεχαώ* by Josephus, Manetho in Jul. Afric., and Euseb., after the LXX. ; and *Νεκώς* by Herod. ii. 158, 159, iv. 42, and Diod. Sic. i. 33 ; according to Brugsch, *hist. d'Eg.* i. p. 252, *Nekåou*) was, according to Man., the sixth king of the twenty-sixth (Saitic) dynasty, the second Pharaoh of that name, the son of Psammetichus I. and grandson of Necho I. ; and, according to Herodotus, he was celebrated for a canal which he proposed to have cut in order to connect the Nile with the Red Sea, as well as for the circumnavigation of Africa (compare Brugsch, *l.c.*, according to whom he reigned from 611 to 595 B.C.). Whether "the king of Asshur" against whom Necho marched was the last ruler of the Assyrian empire, *Asardanpal* (*Sardanapal*), *Saracus* according to the monuments (see Brandis, *Ueber den Gewinn*, p. 55 ; M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Assurs*, pp. 110 sqq. and 192), or the existing ruler of the Assyrian empire which had already fallen, Nabopolassar the king of Babylon, who put an end to the Assyrian monarchy in alliance with the Medes by the conquest and destruction of Nineveh, and founded the Chaldæan or Babylonian empire, it is impossible to determine, because the year in which Nineveh was taken cannot be exactly decided, and all that is certain is that Nineveh had fallen before the battle of Carchemish in the year 606 B.C. Compare M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Assurs*, pp. 109 sqq. and 203, 204.—King Josiah went against the Egyptian, and " he (Necho) slew him at Megiddo when he saw him," *i.e.* caught sight of him. This extremely brief notice of the death of Josiah is explained thus in the Chronicles: that Necho sent ambassadors to Josiah, when he was taking the field against him, with an appeal that he would not fight against him, because his only intention was to make war upon Asshur, but that Josiah did not allow himself to be diverted from his purpose, and fought a battle with Necho in the valley of Megiddo, in which he was mortally wounded by the archers. What induced Josiah to oppose with force of arms the advance of the Egyptian to the Euphrates, notwithstanding the assurance of Necho that he had no wish to fight against Judah, is neither to be sought for in the fact that Josiah was dependent upon Babylon, which is at variance with history, nor in the fact that the kingdom of Judah had taken possession of all the territory of the ancient inheritance of Israel, and Josiah was endeavouring to restore all the ancient glory of the house of David over the surrounding nations (Ewald, *Gesch.* iii. p. 707), but solely in Josiah's conviction that Judah could not remain neutral in the war which had broken out between Egypt and Babylon, and in the hope that by attacking Necho, and frustrating his expedition to the Euphrates, he might be able to avert great distress from his own land and kingdom.[1]

This battle is also mentioned by Herodotus (ii. 159); but he calls the place where it was fought *Μάγδολον, i.e.* neither *Migdol,* which was twelve Roman miles to the south of Pelusium (Forbiger, *Hdb. d. alten Geogr.* ii. p. 695), nor the perfectly apocryphal *Magdala* or *Migdal Zebaiah* mentioned by the Talmudists (Reland, *Pal.* p. 898, 899), as Movers supposes. We might rather think with Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 708) of the present *Mejdel,* to the south-east of Acca, at a northern source of the Kishon, and regard this as the place where the Egyptian camp was pitched, whereas Israel stood to the east of it, at the place still called *Rummane,* at *Hadad-Rimmon* in the valley of Megiddo, as Ewald assumes (*Gesch.* iii. p. 708). But even this combination is overthrown by the fact that *Rummane,* which lies to the east of *el Mejdel* at the distance of a mile and three-quarters (geogr.), on the southern edge of the plain of Buttauf, cannot possibly be the *Hadad-Rimmon* mentioned in Zech. xii. 11, where king Josiah died after he had been wounded in the battle. For since *Megiddo* is identical with the Roman *Legio,* the present *Lejun,* as Robinson has proved (see at Josh. xii. 21), and as is generally admitted even by C. v. Raumer (*Pal.* p. 447, note, ed. 4), *Hadad-Rimmon* must be the same as the village of *Rümmuni* (*Rummane*), which is three-quarters of an hour to the south of Lejun, where the Scottish missionaries in the year 1839 found many ancient wells and other traces of Israelitish times (V. de Velde, *R.* i. p. 267; *Memoir*, pp. 333, 334). But this Rummane is four geographical miles distant from *el Mejdel*, and Megiddo three and a half, so that the battle fought at Megiddo cannot take its name from el Mejdel, which is more than three miles off. The *Magdolon* of Herodotus can only arise from some confusion between it and *Megiddo*, which was a very easy thing with the Greek pronunciation *Μαγεδδώ*, without there being any necessity to assume that Herodotus was thinking of the Egyptian *Migdol*, which is called *Magdolo* in the *Itin. Ant.* p. 171 (cf. Brugsch, *Geogr. Inschriften altägypt. Denkmäler*, i. pp. 261, 262). If, then, Josiah went to Megiddo in the plain of Esdrelom to meet the king of Egypt, and fell in with him there, there can be no doubt that Necho came by sea to Palestine and landed at Acco, as des Vignoles (*Chronol.* ii. p. 427) assumed.[1] For if the Egyptian army had marched by land through the plain of Philistia, Josiah would certainly have gone thither to meet it, and not have allowed it to advance into the plain of Megiddo without fighting a battle.—Ver. 30. The brief statement, "his servants carried him dead from Megiddo and brought him to Jerusalem," is given with more minuteness in the Chronicles: his servants took him, the severely wounded king, by his own command, from his chariot to his second chariot, and drove him to Jerusalem, and he died and was buried, etc. Where he died the Chronicles do not affirm; the occurrence of וַיָּמָת after the words "they brought him to Jerusalem," does not prove that he did not die till he reached Jerusalem. If we compare Zech. xii. 11, where the prophet draws a parallel between the lamentation at the death of the Messiah and the lamentation of Hadad-Rimmon in the valley of Megiddo, as the deepest lamentation of the people in the olden time, with the account given in 2 Chron. xxxv. 25 of the lamentation of the whole nation at the death of Josiah, there can hardly be any doubt that Josiah died on the way to Jerusalem at Hadad-Rimmon, the present Rummane, to the south of Lejun (see above), and was taken to Jerusalem dead.—He was followed on the throne by his younger son Jehoahaz, whom the people (עַם הָאָרֶץ, as in ch. xxi. 24) anointed king, passing over the elder, Eliakim, probably because they regarded him as the more able man.

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[1] M. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch. Ass.* p. 364) also calls Josiah's enterprise "a perfectly correct policy. Nineveh was falling (if not already fallen), and the Syrian princes, both those who had remained independent, like Josiah, and also the vassals of Asshur, might hope that, after the fall of Nineveh, they would succeed in releasing Syria from every foreign yoke. How well-founded this hope was, is evident from the strenuous exertions which Nabukudrussur was afterwards obliged to make, in order to effect the complete subjugation of Syria. It was therefore necessary to hinder at any price the settlement of the Egyptians now. Even though Necho assured Josiah that he was not marching against him (2 Chron. xxxv. 21), Josiah knew that if once the Egyptians were lords of Cœle-Syria, his independence would be gone."

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[1] This is favoured by the account in Herodotus (ii. 159), that Necho built ships: *τριήρεες αἱ μὲν ἐπὶ τῇ βορηΐῃ θαλάσσῃ . . . αἱ δὲ ἐν τῷ Ἀραβίῳ κόλπῳ* (*triremes in septentrionale et australe mare mittendas.* Bähr)—*καὶ ταυτῃσί τε ἐχρᾶτο ἐν τῷ δέοντι· καὶ Σύροισι πεζῇ ὁ Νεκὼς συμβαλὼν ἐν Μαγδόλῳ ἐνίκησε*; from which we may infer that Necho carried his troops by sea to Palestine, and then fought the battle on the land. M. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch.* p. 365) also finds it very improbable that Necho used his fleet in this war; but he does not think it very credible "that he embarked his whole army, instead of marching them by the land route so often taken by the Egyptian army, the key of which, viz. the land of the Philistines, was at least partially subject to him," because the *ὁλκάδες* (ships of burden) required for the transport of a large army were hardly to be obtained in sufficient numbers in Egypt. But this difficulty, which rests upon mere conjecture, is neutralized by the fact, which M. Duncker (*Gesch.* i. p. 618) also adduces in support of the voyage by sea, namely, that the decisive battle with the Jews was fought to the north-west of Jerusalem, and when the Jews were defeated, the way to Jerusalem stood open for their retreat. Movers (*Phöniz.* ii. 1, p. 420), who also imagines that Necho advanced with a large land-army towards the frontier of Palestine, has therefore transferred the battle to Magdolo on the Egyptian frontier; but he does this by means of the most arbitrary interpretation of the account given by Herodotus.

CHAP. XXIII. 31–XXIV. 17. REIGNS OF THE KINGS JEHOAHAZ, JEHOIAKIM, AND JEHOIACHIN.

Vers. 31–35. Reign of Jehoahaz (cf. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 1-4).—*Jehoahaz,* called significantly by Jeremiah (xxii. 11) *Shallum, i.e.* "to whom it is requited," reigned only three months, and did evil in the eyes of the Lord as all his fathers had done. The people (or the popular party), who had preferred him to his elder brother, had apparently set great hopes upon him, as we may judge from Jer. xxii. 10–12, and seem to have expected that his strength and energy would serve to avert the danger which threatened the kingdom on the part of Necho. Ezekiel (ch. xix. 3) compares him to a young lion which learned to catch the prey and devoured men, but, as soon as the nations heard of him, was taken in their pit and led by nose-rings to Egypt, and thus attributes to him the character of a tyrant disposed to acts of violence; and Josephus accordingly (*Ant.* x. 5, 2) describes him as *ἀσεβὴς καὶ μιαρὸς τὸν τρόπον.*—Ver. 33. "Pharaoh Necho put him in fetters (וַיַּאַסְרֵהוּ) at Riblah in the land of Hamath, when he had become king at Jerusalem." In 2 Chron. xxxvi. 3 we have, instead of this, "the king of Egypt deposed him (יְסִירֵהוּ) at Jerusalem." The Masoretes have substituted us *Keri* מִמְּלֹךְ, "away from being king," or "that he might be no longer king," in the place of בִּמְלֹךְ, and Thenius and Bertheau prefer the former, because the LXX. have *τοῦ μὴ βασιλεύειν* not in our text only, but in the Chronicles also; but they ought not to have appealed to the Chronicles, inasmuch as the LXX. have not rendered the Hebrew text there, but have simply repeated the words from the text of the book of Kings. The *Keri* is nothing more than an emendation explaining the sense, which the LXX. have also followed. The two texts are not contradictory, but simply complete each other: for, as Clericus has correctly observed, "Jehoahaz would of course be removed from Jerusalem before he was cast into chains; and there was nothing to prevent his being dethroned at Jerusalem before he was taken to Riblah." We are not told in what way Necho succeeded in getting Jehoahaz into his power, so as to put him in chains at Riblah. The assumption of J. D. Michaelis and others, that his elder brother Eliakim, being dissatisfied with the choice of Jehoahaz as king, had recourse to Necho at Riblah, in the hope of getting possession of his father's kingdom through his instrumentality, is precluded by the fact that Jehoahaz would certainly not have been so foolish as to appear before the enemy of his country at a mere summons from Pharaoh, who was at Riblah, and allow him to depose him, when he was perfectly safe in Jerusalem, where the will of the people had raised him to the throne. If Necho wanted to interfere with the internal affairs of the kingdom of Judah, it would never have done for him to proceed beyond Palestine to Syria after the victory at Megiddo, without having first deposed Jehoahaz, who had been raised to the throne at Jerusalem without any regard to his will. The course of events was therefore probably the following: After the victory at Megiddo, Necho intended to continue his march to the Euphrates; but on hearing that Jehoahaz had ascended the throne, and possibly also in consequence of complaints which Eliakim had made to him on that account, he ordered a division of his army to march against Jerusalem, and while the main army was marching slowly to Riblah, he had Jerusalem taken, king Jehoahaz dethroned, the land laid under tribute, Eliakim appointed king as his vassal, and the deposed Jehoahaz brought to his headquarters at Riblah, then put into chains and transported to Egypt; so that the statement in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 3, "he deposed him at Jerusalem," is to be taken quite literally, even if Necho did not come to Jerusalem *in propriâ personâ*, but simply effected this through the medium of one of his generals.[1] *Riblah* has been preserved in the miserable village of *Rible*, from ten to twelve hours to the S.S.W. of Hums (Emesa) by the river el Ahsy (Orontes), in a large fruitful plain of the northern portion of the Bekaa, which was very well adapted to serve as the camping ground of Necho's army as well as of that of Nebuchadnezzar (ch. xxv. 6, 20, 21), not only because it furnished the most abundant supply of food and fodder, but also on account of its situation on the great caravan-road from Palestine by Damascus, Emesa, and Hamath to Thapsacus and Carchemish on the Euphrates (cf. Rob. *Bibl. Res.* pp. 542–546 and 641).—In the payment imposed upon the land by Necho, one talent of gold (c. 25,000 thalers: £3750) does not seem to bear any correct proportion to 100 talents of silver (c. 250,000 thalers, or £37,500), and consequently the LXX. have 100 talents of gold, the Syr. and Arab. 10 talents; and Thenius supposes this to have been the original reading, and explains the reading in the text from the dropping out of a י (= 10), though without reflecting that as a rule the number 10 would require the plural כִּכָּרִים.—Ver. 34. From the words "Necho made Eliakim the son of Josiah king *in the place of his father Josiah,*" it follows that the king of Egypt did not acknowledge the reign of Jehoahaz, because he had been installed by the people without his consent. "And changed his name into Jehoiakim." The alteration of the name was a sign of dependence. In ancient times princes were accustomed to give new names to the persons whom they took into their service, and masters to give new names to their slaves (cf. Gen. xli. 45, Ezra v. 14, Dan. i. 7, and Hävernick on the last passage).—But while these names were generally borrowed from heathen deities, Eliakim, and at a later period Mattaniah (xxiv. 17), received genuine Israelitish names, *Jehoiakim, i.e.* "Jehovah will set up," and *Zidkiyahu, i.e.* "righteousness of Jehovah;" from which we may infer that Necho and Nebuchadnezzar did not treat the vassal kings installed by them exactly as their slaves, but allowed them to choose the new names for themselves, and simply confirmed them as a sign of their supremacy. *Eliakim* altered his name into *Jehoiakim, i.e. El* (God) into *Jehovah,* to set the allusion to the establishment of the kingdom, which is implied in the name, in a still more definite relation to Jehovah the covenant God, who had promised to establish the seed of David (2 Sam. vii. 14), possibly with an

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[1] Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 720) also observes, that "Necho himself may have been in Jerusalem at the time for the purpose of installing his vassal:" this, he says, "is indicated by the brief words in 2 Kings xxiii. 33, 34, and nothing can be found to say against it in other historical sources;" though he assumes that Jehoahaz had allowed himself to be enticed by Necho to go to Riblah into the Egyptian camp, where he was craftily put into chains, and soon carried off as a prisoner to Egypt.—We should have a confirmation of the taking of Jerusalem by Necho in the account given by Herodotus (ii. 159): *μετὰ δὲ τὴν μάχην* (*i.e.* after the battle at Megiddo) *Κάδυτιν πόλιν τῆς Συρίης ἐοῦσαν μεγάλην εἷλε*, if any evidence could be brought to establish the opinion that by *Κάδυτις* we are to understand Jerusalem. But although what Herodotus says (iii. 5) concerning *Κάδυτις* does not apply to any other city of Palestine so well as to Jerusalem, the use of the name *Κάδυτις* for Jerusalem has not yet been sufficiently explained, since it cannot come from קדושה, the holy city, because the ש of this word does not pass into ת in any Semitic dialect, and the explanation recently attempted by Böttcher (*N. ex. Krit. Aehrenlese*, ii. pp. 119 sqq.) from the Aramæan חדיתא, the *renewed* city (new-town), is based upon many very questionable conjectures. At the same time so much is certain, that the view which Hitzig has revived (*de Cadyti urbe Herod.* Gott. 1829, p. 11, and *Urgeschichte der Philister*, pp. 96 sqq.), and which is now the prevalent one, viz. that *Κάδυτις* is *Gaza*, is exposed to some well-founded objections, even after what Stark (*Gaza*, pp. 218 sqq.) has adduced in its favour. The description which Herodotus gives (iii. 5) of the land-road to Egypt: *ἀπὸ Φοινίκης μέχρι οὔρων τῶν Καδύτιος πόλιος, ἥ ἐστι Σύρων τῶν Παλαιστινῶν καλεομένων·*

ἀπὸ δὲ Καδύτιος, ἐούσης πόλιος (ὡς ἐμοὶ δοκέει) Σαρδίων οὐ πολλῷ ἐλάσσονος, ἀπὸ ταύτης τὰ ἐμπόρια τὰ ἐπὶ θαλάσσης μέχρι Ἰηνύσου πόλιός ἐστι τοῦ Ἀραβίου· does not apply to Gaza, because there were no commercial towns on the sea-coast between the district of Gaza and the town of *Yenysus* (the present *Khan Yûnas*); but between the district of Jerusalem and the town of *Yenysus* there were the Philistian cities Ashkelon and Gaza, which Herodotus might call *τὰ ἐμπόρια τοῦ Ἀραβίου*, whereas the comparison made between the size of Kadytis and that of Sardes points rather to Jerusalem than to Gaza. Still less can the *datum* in Jer. xlvii. 1, "before Pharaoh smote Gaza," be adduced in support of Gaza. If we bear in mind that Jeremiah's prophecy (ch. xlvii.) was not uttered before the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign, and therefore that Pharaoh had not smitten Gaza at that time, supposing that this Pharaoh was really Necho, it cannot have been till after his defeat at Carchemish that Necho took Gaza on his return home. Ewald, Hitzig, and Graf assume that this was the case; but, as M. v. Niebuhr has correctly observed, it has "every military probability" against it, and even the incredibility that "a routed Oriental army in its retreat, which it evidently accomplished in one continuous march, notwithstanding the fact that on its line of march there were the strongest positions, on the Orontes, Lebanon, etc., at which it might have halted, should have taken the city upon its flight." And, lastly, the name *Κάδυτις* does not answer to the name *Gaza*, even though the latter was spelt *Gazatu* in early Egyptian (Brugsch, *Geograph. Inschr.* ii. p. 32), since the *υ* (*y*) of the second syllable still remains unexplained.

intentional opposition to the humiliation with which the royal house of David was threatened by Jeremiah and other prophets. —" But Jehoahaz he had taken (לָקַח, like יִקַּח in ch. xxiv. 12), and he came to Egypt and died there"—when, we are not told. —In ver. 35, even before the account of Jehoiakim's reign, we have fuller particulars respecting the payment of the tribute which Necho imposed upon the land (ver. 33), because it was the condition on which he was appointed king.—" The gold and silver Jehoiakim gave to Pharaoh; yet (אַךְ = but in order to raise it) he valued (הֶעֱרִיךְ as in Lev. xxvii. 8) the land, to give the money according to Pharaoh's command; of every one according to his valuation, he exacted the silver and gold of the population of the land, to give it to Pharaoh Necho." נָגַשׂ, to exact tribute, is construed with a double accusative, and אִישׁ בְּעֶרְכּוֹ placed first for the sake of emphasis, as an explanatory apposition to אֶת־עַם הָאָרֶץ.

Ver. 36–ch. xxiv. 7. Reign of Jehoiakim (cf. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 5–8).—Jehoiakim reigned eleven years in the spirit of his ungodly forefathers (compare ver. 37 with ver. 32). Jeremiah represents him (ch. xxii. 13 sqq.) as a bad prince, who enriched himself by the unjust oppression of his people, " whose eyes and heart were directed upon nothing but upon gain, and upon innocent blood to shed it, and upon oppression and violence to do them" (compare ch. xxiv. 4 and Jer. xxvi. 22, 23). Josephus therefore describes him as *τὴν φύσιν ἄδικος καὶ κακοῦργος, καὶ μήτε πρὸς Θεὸν ὅσιος, μήτε πρὸς ἀνθρώπους ἐπιεικής* (*Ant.* x. 5, 2). The town of *Rumah*, from which his mother sprang, is not mentioned anywhere else, but it has been supposed to be identical with *Aruma* in the neighbourhood of Shechem (Judg. ix. 41).

Ch. xxiv. ver. 1. " In his days Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babel, came up; and Jehoiakim became subject to him three years, then he revolted from him again." נְבֻכַדְנֶאצַּר, *Nebuchadnezzar*, or נְבוּכַדְרֶאצַּר, *Nebuchadrezzar* (Jer. xxi. 2, 7, xxii. 25, etc.), *Ναβουχοδονόσορ* (LXX.), *Ναβουχοδονόσορος* (Beros. in Jos. *c. Ap.* i. 20, 21), *Ναβοκοδρόσορος* (Strabo, xv. 1, 6), upon the Persian arrow-headed inscriptions at Bisutun *Nabhukudracara* (according to Oppert, composed of the name of God, *Nabhu* (Nebo), the Arabic *kadr*, power, and *zar* or *sar*, prince), and in still other forms (for the different forms of the name see M. v.

Niebuhr's *Gesch.* pp. 41, 42). He was the son of Nabopolassar, the founder of the Chaldæan monarchy, and reigned, according to Berosus (Jos. *l.c.*), Alex. Polyh. (Eusebii *Chron. arm.* i. pp. 44, 45), and the *Canon* of Ptol., forty-three years, from 605 to 562 B.C. With regard to his first campaign against Jerusalem, it is stated in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 6, that " against him (Jehoiakim) came up Nebuchadnezzar, and bound him with brass chains, to carry him (לְהוֹלִיכוֹ) to Babylon ;" and in Dan. i. 1, 2, that " in the year three of the reign of Jehoiakim, Nebuchadnezzar came against Jerusalem and besieged it ; and the Lord gave Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, into his hand, and a portion of the holy vessels, and he brought them (the vessels) into the land of Shinar, into the house of his god," etc. Bertheau (*on Chr.*) admits that all three passages relate to Nebuchadnezzar's first expedition against Jehoiakim and the first taking of Jerusalem by the king of Babylon, and rejects the alteration of לְהוֹלִיכוֹ, " to lead him to Babylon" (Chr.), into *ἀπήγαγεν αὐτόν* (LXX.), for which Thenius decides in his prejudice in favour of the LXX. He has also correctly observed, that the chronicler intentionally selected the infinitive with ל, because he did not intend to speak of the actual transportation of Jehoiakim to Babylon. The words of our text, " Jehoiakim became servant (עֶבֶד) to him," *i.e.* subject to him, simply affirm that he became tributary, not that he was led away. And in the book of Daniel also there is nothing about the leading away of Jehoiakim to Babylon. Whilst, therefore, the three accounts agree in the main with one another, and supply one another's deficiencies, so that we learn that Jehoiakim was taken prisoner at the capture of Jerusalem and put in chains to be led away, but that, inasmuch as he submitted to Nebuchadnezzar and vowed fidelity, he was not taken away, but left upon the throne as vassal of the king of Babylon ; the statement in the book of Daniel concerning the time when this event occurred, which is neither contained in our account nor in the Chronicles, presents a difficulty when compared with Jer. xxv. and xlvi. 2, and different attempts, some of them very constrained, have been made to remove it. According to Jer. xlvi. 2, Nebuchadnezzar smote Necho the king of Egypt at Carchemish, on the Euphrates, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim. This year is not only called the first year of Nebuchadnezzar in Jer. xxv. 1, but is represented by the prophet as the turning-point of the kingdom of Judah by the announcement that the Lord would bring His servant Nebuchadnezzar upon Judah and its inhabitants, and also upon all the nations dwelling round about, that he would devastate Judah, and that these nations would serve the king of Babylon seventy years (Jer. xxv. 9–11). Consequently not only the defeat of Necho at Carchemish, but also the coming of Nebuchadnezzar to Judah, fell in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and not in the third. To remove this discrepancy, some have proposed that the time mentioned, "in the fourth year of Jehoiakim" (Jer. xlvi. 2), should be understood as relating, not to the year of the battle at Carchemish, but to the time of the prophecy of Jeremiah against Egypt contained in ch. xlvi., and that Jer. xxv. should also be explained as follows, that in this chapter the prophet is not announcing the first capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, but is proclaiming a year after this the destruction of Jerusalem and the devastation of the whole land, or a total judgment upon Jerusalem and the rest of the nations mentioned there (M. v. Nieb. *Gesch.* pp. 86, 87, 371). But this explanation is founded upon the erroneous assumption, that Jer. xlvi. 3–12 does not contain a prediction of the catastrophe awaiting Egypt, but a picture of what has already taken place there; and it is only in a very forced manner that it can be brought into harmony with the contents of Jer. xxv.[1] We must rather take "the year three of the reign of Jehoiakim" (Dan. i. 1) as the extreme *terminus a quo* of Nebuchadnezzar's coming, *i.e.* must understand the statement thus: that in the year referred to Nebuchadnezzar commenced the expedition against Judah, and smote Necho at Carchemish at the commencement of the fourth year of Jehoiakim (Jer. xlvi. 2), and then, following up this victory, took Jerusalem in the same year, and made Jehoiakim tributary, and at the same time carried off to Babylon a portion of the sacred vessels, and some young men of royal blood as hostages, one of whom was Daniel (2 Chron. xxxvi. 7; Dan. i. 2 sqq.). The fast mentioned in Jer. xxxvi. 9, which took place in the fifth year of Jehoiakim, cannot be adduced in disproof of this; for extraordinary fast-days were not only appointed for the purpose of averting great threatening dangers, but also after severe calamities which had fallen upon the land or people, to expiate His wrath by humiliation before God, and to invoke the divine compassion to remove the judgment that had fallen upon them. The objection, that the godless king would hardly have thought of renewing the remembrance of a divine judgment by a day of repentance and prayer, but would rather have desired to avoid everything that could make the people despair, falls to the ground, with the erroneous assumption upon which it is founded, that by the fast-day Jehoiakim simply intended to renew the remembrance of the judgment which had burst upon Jerusalem, whereas he rather desired by outward humiliation before God to secure the help of God to enable him to throw off the Chaldæan yoke, and arouse in the people a religious enthusiasm for war against their oppressors.—Further information concerning this first expedition of Nebuchadnezzar is supplied by the account of Berosus, which Josephus (*Ant.* x. 11, and *c. Ap.* i. 19) has preserved from the third book of his Chaldæan history, namely, that when Nabopolassar received intelligence of the revolt of the satrap whom he had placed over Egypt, Cœle-Syria, and Phœnicia, because he was no longer able on account of age to bear the hardships of war, he placed a portion of his army in the hands of his youthful son Nebuchadnezzar and sent him against the satrap. Nebuchadnezzar defeated him in battle, and established his power over that country again. In the meantime Nabopolassar fell sick and died in Babylon; and as soon as the tidings reached Nebuchadnezzar, he hastened through the desert to Babylon with a small number of attendants, and directed his army to follow slowly after regulating the affairs of Egypt and the rest of the country, and to bring with it the prisoners *from the Jews*, Syrians, Phœnicians, and Egyptian tribes, and with the heavily-armed troops. So much, at any rate, is evident from this account, after deducting the motive assigned for the war, which is given from a Chaldæan point of view, and may be taken as a historical fact, that even before his father's death Nebuchadnezzar had not only smitten the Egyptians, but had also conquered Judah and penetrated to the borders of Egypt. And there is no discrepancy between the statement of Berosus, that Nebuchadnezzar was not yet king, and the fact that in the biblical books he is called king proleptically, because he marched against Judah with kingly authority.

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[1] Still less tenable is the view of Hofmann, renewed by Zündel (*Krit. Unterss. üb. d. Abfassungszeit des B. Daniel*, p. 25), that Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem in the third year of Jehoiakim, and that it was not till the following, or fourth year, that he defeated the Egyptian army at Carchemish, because so long as Pharaoh Necho stood with his army by or in Carchemish, on the Euphrates, Nebuchadnezzar could not possibly attempt to pass it so as to effect a march upon Jerusalem.

Vers. 2–7. To punish Jehoiakim's rebellion, Jehovah sent hosts of Chaldæans, Aramæans, Moabites, and Ammonites against him and against Judah to destroy it (לְהַאֲבִידוֹ). Nebuchadnezzar was probably too much occupied with other matters relating to his kingdom, during the earliest years of his reign after his father's death, to be able to proceed at once against Jehoiakim and punish him for his revolt.[1] He may also have thought it a matter of too little importance for him to go himself, as there was not much reason to be afraid of Egypt since its first defeat (cf. M. v. Niebuhr, p. 375). He therefore merely sent such troops against him as were in the neighbourhood of Judah at the time. The tribes mentioned along with the Chaldæans were probably all subject to Nebuchadnezzar, so that they attacked Judah at his command in combination with the Chaldæan tribes left upon the frontier. How much they effected is not distinctly stated; but it is evident that they were not able to take Jerusalem, from the fact that after the death of Jehoiakim his son was able to ascend the throne (ver. 6).—The sending of these troops is ascribed to Jehovah, who, as the supreme controller of the fate of the covenant-nation, punished Jehoiakim for his rebellion. For, after the Lord had given Judah into the hands of the Chaldæans as a punishment for its apostasy from Him, all revolt from them was rebellion against the Lord. "According to the word of Jehovah, which He spake by His servants the prophets," viz. Isaiah, Micah, Habakkuk, Jeremiah, and others.—Vers. 3, 4. אַךְ עַל־פִּי יי : "only according to the mouth (command) of Jehovah did this take place against Judah," *i.e.* for no other reason than because the Lord had determined to put away Judah from before His face because of Manasseh's sins (cf. ch. xxi. 12–16, and xxiii. 27). "And Jehovah would not forgive," even if the greatest intercessors, Moses and Samuel, had come before Him (Jer. xv. 1 sqq.), because the measure of the sins was full, so that God was obliged to punish according to His holy righteousness. We must repeat בְּ from the preceding words before דַּם הַנָּקִי.—Ver. 6. "Jehoiakim lay down to (fell asleep with) his fathers, and Jehoiachin his son became king in his stead." That this statement is not in contradiction to the prophecies of Jer. xxii. 19: "Jehoiakim shall be buried like an ass, carried away and cast out far away from the gates of Jerusalem," and xxxvi. 30: "no son of his shall sit upon the throne of David, and his body shall lie exposed to the heat by day and to the cold by night," is now generally admitted, as it has already been by J. D. Michaelis and Winer. But the solution proposed by Michaelis, Winer, and M. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch.* p. 376) is not sufficient, namely, that at the conquest of Jerusalem, which took place three months after the death of Jehoiakim, his bones were taken out of the grave, either by the victors out of revenge for his rebellion, or by the fury of the people, and cast out before the city gate; for Jeremiah expressly predicts that he shall have no funeral and no burial whatever. We must therefore assume that he was slain in a battle fought with the troops sent against him, and was not buried at all; an assumption which is not at variance with the words, "he laid himself down to his fathers," since this formula does not necessarily indicate a peaceful death by sickness, but is also applied to king Ahab, who was slain in battle (1 Kings xxii. 40, cf. 2 Kings xxii. 20).[1]—And even though his son Jehoiachin ascended the throne after his father's death and maintained his position for three months against the Chaldæans, until at length he fell into their hands and was carried away alive to Babylon, the prophet might very truly describe this short reign as not sitting upon the throne of David (cf. Graf on Jer. xxii. 19).—To the death of Jehoiakim there is appended the notice in ver. 7, that the king of Egypt did not go out of his own land any more, because the king of Babylon had taken away everything that had belonged to the king of Egypt, from the brook of Egypt to the river Euphrates. The purpose of this notice is to indicate, on the one hand, what attitude Necho, whose march to the Euphrates was previously mentioned, had assumed on the conquest of Judah by the Chaldæans, and on the other hand, that under these circumstances a successful resistance to the Chaldæans on the part of Judah was not for a moment to be thought of.

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[1] Compare the remarks of M. v. Niebuhr on this point (*Gesch.* pp. 208, 209) and his summary at p. 209: "Nebuchadnezzar had enough to do in Babylon and the eastern half of his kingdom, to complete the organization of the new kingdom, to make the military roads to the western half of the kingdom along the narrow valley of the Euphrates and through the desert, and also to fortify them and provide them with watering stations and every other requisite, to repair the damages of the Scythian hordes and the long contest with Nineveh, to restore the shattered authority, and to bring Arabs and mountain-tribes to order. All this was more important than a somewhat more rapid termination of the Egyptian war and the pacification of Syria."

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[1] The supposition of Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 733), that Jehoiakim was enticed out of the capital by a stratagem of the enemy, and taken prisoner, and because he made a furious resistance was hurried off in a scuffle and mercilessly slaughtered, is at variance with the fact that, according to ver. 10, it was not till after his death that the army of the enemy advanced to the front of Jerusalem and commenced the siege.

Vers. 8–17 (cf. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 9 and 10). Jehoiachin, יְהוֹיָכִין or יוֹיָכִין (Ezek. i. 2), *i.e.* he whom Jehovah fortifies, called יְכָנְיָהוּ in 1 Chron. iii. 16, 17, and Jer. xxvii. 20, xxviii. 4, etc., and כָּנְיָהוּ in Jer. xxii. 24, 28, xxxvii. 1, probably according to the popular twisting and contraction of the name Jehoiachin, was eighteen years old when he ascended the throne (the eight years of the Chronicles are a slip of the pen), and reigned three months, or, according to the more precise statement of the Chronicles, three months and ten days, in the spirit of his father. Ezekiel (xix. 5–7) describes him not only as a young lion, who learned to prey and devoured men, like Jehoahaz, but also affirms of him that he knew their (the deceased men's) widows, *i.e.* ravished them, and destroyed their cities,—that is to say, he did not confine his deeds of violence to individuals, but extended them to all that was left behind by those whom he had murdered, viz. to their families and possessions; and nothing is affirmed in Jer. xxii. 24 and 28 respecting his character at variance with this. His mother *Nehushta* was a daughter of Elnathan, a ruler of the people, or prince, from Jerusalem (Jer. xxvi. 22, xxxvi. 12, 25).—Ver. 10. "At that time," *i.e.* when Jehoiachin had come to the throne, or, according to 2 Chron. xxxvi. 10, "at the turn of the year," *i.e.* in the spring (see at 1 Kings xx. 22), the servants (generals) of Nebuchadnezzar marched against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. The *Keri* עָלוּ is substantially correct, but is an unnecessary alteration of the *Chethîb* עָלָה, since the verb when it precedes the subject is not unfrequently used in the singular, though before a plural subject (cf. Ewald, § 316, *a*). The עַבְדֵי נב׳ are different from the גְּדוּדִים of ver. 2. As the troops sent against Jehoiakim had not been able to conquer Judah, especially Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar sent his generals with an army against Jerusalem, to besiege the city and take it. —Ver. 11. During the siege he came himself to punish Jehoiakim's revolt in the person of his successor.—Ver. 12. Then Jehoiachin went out to the king of Babylon to yield himself up to him, because he perceived the impossibility of holding the city any longer against the besiegers, and probably hoped to secure the favour of Nebuchadnezzar, and perhaps to retain the throne as his vassal by a voluntary submission. Nebuchadnezzar, however, did not show favour any more, as he had done to Jehoiakim at the first taking of Jerusalem, but treated Jehoiachin as a rebel, made him prisoner, and led him away to Babylon, along with his mother, his wives (ver. 15), his princes and his chamberlains, as Jeremiah had prophesied (ch. xxii. 24 sqq.), in the eighth year of his (Nebuchadnezzar's) reign. The reference to the king's mother in vers. 12 and 15 is not to be explained on the ground that she still acted as guardian over the king, who was not yet of age (J. D. Mich.), but from the influential position which she occupied in the kingdom as הַגְּבִירָה (Jer. xxix. 2: see at 1 Kings xiv. 21). The eighth year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar is reckoned from the time when his father had transferred to him the chief command over the army to make war upon Necho, according to which his *first* year coincides with the *fourth* year of Jehoiakim (Jer. xxv. 1). As Nebuchadnezzar acted as king, so far as the Jews were concerned, from that time forward, although he conducted the war by command of his father, this is always reckoned as the point of time at which his reign commenced, both in our books and also in Jeremiah (cf. ch. xxv. 8; Jer. xxxii. 1). According to this calculation, his reign lasted forty-four years, viz. the eight years of Jehoiakim and the thirty-six years of Jehoiachin's imprisonment, as is evident from ch. xxv. 27.—Ver. 13. Nebuchadnezzar thereupon, that is to say, when he had forced his way into the city, plundered the treasures of the temple and palace, and broke the gold off the vessels which Solomon had made in the temple of Jehovah. קִצֵּץ, to cut off, break off; as in ch. xvi. 17, *i.e.* to bear off the gold plates. Nebuchadnezzar had already taken a portion of the golden vessels of the temple away with him at the first taking of Jerusalem in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and had placed them in the temple of his god at Babylon (2 Chron. xxxvi. 7; Dan. i. 2). They were no doubt the smaller vessels of solid gold,—basins, scoops, goblets, knives, tongs, etc.,—which Cyrus delivered up again to the Jews on their return to their native land (Ezra i. 7 sqq.). This time he took the gold off the larger vessels, which were simply plated with that metal, such as the altar of burnt-offering, the table of shew-bread and ark of the covenant, and carried it away as booty, so that on the third conquest of Jerusalem, in the time of Zedekiah, beside a few gold and silver basins and scoops (ch. xxv. 15) there were only the large brazen vessels of the court remaining (ch. xxv. 13–17; Jer. xxvii. 18 sqq.). The words, "as Jehovah had spoken," refer to ch. xx. 17 and Isa. xxxix. 6, and to the sayings of other prophets, such as Jer. xv. 13, xvii. 3, etc.—Vers. 14–16. Beside these treasures, he carried away captive to Babylon the cream of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, not only the most affluent, but, as is evident from Jer. xxiv., the best portion in a moral respect. In ver. 14 the number of those who were carried off is simply given in a general form, according to its sum-total, as 10,000; and then in vers. 15 and 16 the details are more minutely specified. "All Jerusalem" is the whole of the population of Jerusalem, which is first of all divided into two leading classes, and then more precisely defined by the clause, "nothing was left except the common people," and reduced to the cream of the citizens. The king, queen-mother, and king's wives being passed over and mentioned for the first time in the special list in ver. 15, there are noticed here כָּל־הַשָּׂרִים and כָּל גִּבּוֹרֵי הַחַיִל, who form the first of the leading classes. By the שָׂרִים are meant, according to ver. 15, the סָרִיסִים, chamberlains, *i.e.* the officials of the king's court in general, and by אֵילֵי הָאָרֶץ ("the mighty of the land") all the heads of the tribes and families of the nation that were found in Jerusalem; and under the last the priests and prophets, who were also carried away, according to Jer. xxix. 1, with Ezekiel among them (Ezek. i. 1), are included as the spiritual heads of the people. The גִּבּוֹרֵי הַחַיִל are called אַנְשֵׁי הַחַיִל in ver. 16; their number was 7000. The persons intended are not warriors, but men of property, as in ch. xv. 20. The second class of those who were carried away consisted of כָּל־הֶחָרָשׁ, all the workers in stone, metal, and wood, that is to say, masons, smiths, and carpenters; and הַמַּסְגֵּר, the locksmiths, including probably not actual locksmiths only, but makers of weapons also. There is no need for any serious refutation of the marvellous explanation given of מַסְגֵּר by Hitzig (on Jer. xxiv. 1), who derives it from מַס and גֵּר, and supposes it to be an epithet applied to the remnant of the Canaanites, who had been made into tributary labourers, although it has been adopted by Thenius and Graf, who make them into artisans of the foreign socagers. דַּלַּת־הָאָרֶץ = דַּלַּת עַם־הָאָרֶץ (ch. xxv. 12), the poor people of the land, *i.e.* the lower portion of the population of Jerusalem, from whom Nebuchadnezzar did not fear any rebellion, because they possessed nothing (Jer. xxxix. 10), *i.e.* neither property (money nor other possessions), nor strength and ability to organize a revolt. The antithesis to these is formed by the גִּבּוֹרִים עֹשֵׂי מִלְחָמָה, the strong or powerful men, who were in a condition to originate and carry on a war; for this category includes all who were carried away, not merely the thousand workmen, but also the seven thousand אַנְשֵׁי הַחַיִל, and the king's officers and the chiefs of the nation, whose number amounted to two thousand, since the total number of the exiles was ten thousand. There is no special allusion to warriors or military, because in the struggle for the rescue of the capital and the kingdom from destruction every man who could bear arms performed military service, so that the distinction between warriors and non-warriors was swept away, and the actual warriors are swallowed up in the ten thousand. *Babel* is the country of Babylonia, or rather the Babylonian empire.—Ver. 17. Over the lower classes of the people who had been left behind Nebuchadnezzar placed the paternal uncle of the king, who had been led away, viz. Mattaniah, and made him king under the name of Zedekiah. He was the youngest son of Josiah (Jer. i. 3, xxxvii. 1); was only ten years old when his father died, and twenty-one years old when he ascended the throne; and as the uncle of Jehoiachin, who being only a youth of eighteen could not have a son capable of reigning, had the first claim to the throne. Instead of דֹּדוֹ, his uncle, we have in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 10 אָחִיו, his brother, *i.e.* his nearest relation. On the change in the name see at ch. xxiii. 34. The name צִדְקִיָּהוּ, *i.e.* he who has Jehovah's righteousness, was probably chosen by Mattaniah in the hope that through him or in his reign the Lord would create the righteousness promised to His people.

CHAP. XXIV. 18–XXV. 30. REIGN OF ZEDEKIAH, DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM AND THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH, AND FATE OF THE PEOPLE LEFT BEHIND, AND OF KING JEHOIACHIN.[1]

Vers. 18–20. *Length and spirit of Zedekiah's reign* (cf. Jer. lii. 1–3, and 2 Chron. xxxvi. 11–13).—Zedekiah's mother Hamital, daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah, was also the mother of Jehoahaz (ch. xxiii. 31); consequently he was his own brother and the half-brother of Jehoiakim, whose mother was named Zebidah (ch. xxiii. 36). His reign lasted eleven years, and in its attitude towards the Lord exactly resembled that of his brother Jehoiakim, except that Zedekiah does not appear to have possessed so much energy for that which was evil. According to Jer. xxxviii. 5 and 24 sqq., he was weak in character, and completely governed by the great men of his kingdom, having no power or courage whatever to offer resistance. But, like them, he did not hearken to the words of the Lord through Jeremiah (Jer. xxxvii. 2), or, as it is expressed in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 12, "he did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet, who spake to him out of the mouth of the Lord."—Ver. 20. "For because of the wrath of the Lord it happened concerning Judah and Jerusalem." The subject to הָיְתָה is to be taken from what precedes, viz. Zedekiah's doing evil, or that such a God-resisting man as Zedekiah became king. "Not that it was of God that Zedekiah was wicked, but that Zedekiah, a man (if we believe Brentius, *in loc.*) simple, dependent upon counsellors, yet at the same time despising the word of God and impenitent (2 Chron. xxxvi. 12, 13), became king, so as to be the cause of Jerusalem's destruction" (Seb. Schm.). On עַד הִשְׁלִיכוֹ וגו' cf. ver. 3, and ch. xvii. 18, 23. "And Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babel," who, according to 2 Chron. xxxvi. 13, had made him swear by God, to whom he was bound

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[1] To this section the historical appendix to the book of Jeremiah (Jer. lii.) furnishes a parallel, which agrees with it for the most part word for word,

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omitting only the short account of the murder of Gedaliah and of the flight of the people to Egypt (vers. 22–26), and adding instead a computation of the number of the people who were led away to Babel by Nebuchadnezzar (vers. 28–30). Apart from the less important variations, which have arisen in part simply from copyists' errors, we have in Jer. lii. 18, and especially in vers. 21 and 22, by no means unimportant notices concerning the vessels of the temple, especially concerning the ornaments of the brazen pillars, which do not occur anywhere in our books. It is evident from this that our text was not derived from Jer. lii. (Hävernick), and that Jer. lii. was not borrowed from our books of Kings and appended to the book of Jeremiah's prophecies (Ros., Maur., Ew., Graf). On the contrary, the two accounts are simply brief extracts from one common and more elaborate history of the later times of the kingdom of Judah, possibly composed by Jeremiah or Baruch, analogous to the two extracts from the history of Hezekiah in 2 Kings xviii.–xx. and Isa. xxxvi.–xxxix.—More minute accounts of this space of time are given in the historical portions of the prophecies of Jeremiah (ch. xxxix.–xliv.), which form an explanatory commentary to the section before us.

by oath to render fealty. This breach of covenant and frivolous violation of his oath Ezekiel also condemns in sharp words (Ezek. xvii. 13 sqq.), as a grievous sin against the Lord. Zedekiah also appears from the very first to have had no intention of keeping the oath of fealty which he took to the king of Babel with very great uprightness. For only a short time after he was installed as king he despatched an embassy to Babel (Jer. xxix. 3), which, judging from the contents of the letter to the exiles that Jeremiah gave to the ambassadors to take with them, can hardly have been sent with any other object than to obtain from the king of Babel the return of those who had been carried away. Then in the fourth year of his reign he himself made a journey to Babel (Jer. xli. 59), evidently to investigate the circumstances upon the spot, and to ensure the king of Babel of his fidelity. And in the fifth month of the same year, probably after his return from Babel, ambassadors of the Moabites, Ammonites, Tyrians, and Sidonians came to Jerusalem to make an alliance with him for throwing off the Chaldæan yoke (Jer. xxvii. 3). Zedekiah also had recourse to Egypt, where the enterprising Pharaoh *Hophra* (*Apries*) had ascended the throne; and then, in spite of the warnings of Jeremiah, trusting to the help of Egypt, revolted from the king of Babel, probably at a time when Nebuchadnezzar (according to the combinations of M. v. Nieb., which are open to question however) was engaged in a war with Media.

Ch. xxv. 1–7. *Siege and conquest of Jerusalem; Zedekiah taken prisoner and led away to Babel* (cf. Jer. lii. 4–11 and xxxix. 1–7).—Ver. 1. In the ninth year of the reign of Zedekiah, on the tenth day of the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar marched with all his forces against Jerusalem and commenced the siege (cf. Jer. xxxix. 1), after he had taken all the rest of the fortified cities of the land, with the exception of Lachish and Azekah, which were besieged at the same time as Jerusalem (Jer. xxxiv. 7). On the very same day the commencement of the siege of Jerusalem was revealed to the prophet Ezekiel in his exile (Ezek. xxiv. 1). "And they built against it (the city) siege-towers round about." דָּיֵק, which only occurs here and in Jeremiah (lii. 4) and Ezekiel (iv. 2, xvii. 17, xxi. 27, xxvi. 8), does not mean either a line of circumvallation (J. D. Mich., Hitzig), or the outermost enclosure constructed of palisades (Thenius, whose assertion that דָּיֵק is always mentioned as the first work of the besiegers is refuted by Ezek. xvii. 17 and xxi. 27), but a *watch*, and that in a collective sense: watch-towers or siege-towers (cf. Ges. *thes.* p. 330, and Hävernick on Ezek. iv. 2).—Ver. 2. "And the city was besieged till the eleventh year of king Zedekiah," in which the northern wall of the city was broken through on the ninth day of the fourth month (ver. 3). That Jerusalem could sustain a siege of this duration, namely eighteen months, shows what the strength of the fortifications must have been. Moreover the siege was interrupted for a short time, when the approach of the Egyptian king Hophra compelled the Chaldæans to march to meet him and drive him back, which they appear to have succeeded in doing without a battle (cf. Jer. xxxvii. 5 sqq., Ezek. xvii. 7).—Vers. 3, 4. Trusting partly to the help of the Egyptians and partly to the strength of Jerusalem, Zedekiah paid no attention to the repeated entreaties of Jeremiah, that he would save himself with his capital and people from the destruction which was otherwise inevitable, by submitting to the Chaldæans (cf. Jer. xxi. 37 and 38), but allowed things to reach their worst, until the famine became so intense, that inhuman horrors were perpetrated (cf. Lam. ii. 20, 21, iv. 9, 10), and eventually a breach was made in the city wall on the ninth day of the fourth month. The statement of the month is omitted in our text, where the words בַּחֹדֶשׁ הָֽרְבִיעִי (Jer. lii. 6, cf. xxxix. 2) have fallen out before בְּתִשְׁעָה (ver. 3, commencement) through the oversight of a copyist. The overwhelming extent of the famine is mentioned, not "because the people were thereby rendered quite unfit to offer any further resistance" (Seb. Schm.), but as a proof of the truth of the prophetic announcements (Lev. xxvi. 29; Deut. xxviii. 53–57; Jer. xv. 2, xxvii. 13; Ezek. iv. 16, 17). עַם הָאָרֶץ are the common people in Jerusalem, or the citizens of the capital. From the more minute account of the entrance of the enemy into the city in Jer. xxxix. 3–5 we learn that the Chaldæans made a breach in the northern or outer wall of the lower city, *i.e.* the second wall, built by Hezekiah and Manasseh (2 Chron. xxxii. 5, xxxiii. 14), and forced their way into the lower city (הַמִּשְׁנֶה, xxii. 14), so that their generals took their stand at the gate of the centre, which was in the wall that separated the lower city from the upper city upon Zion, and formed the passage from the one to the other. When Zedekiah saw them here, he fled by night with the soldiers out of the city, through the gate between the two walls at or above the king's garden, on the road to the plain of the Jordan, while the Chaldæans were round about the city. In ver. 4 a faulty text has come down to us. In the clause וְכָל־אַנְשֵׁי הַמִּלְחָמָה the verb יִבְרְחוּ is omitted, if not even more, namely יִבְרְחוּ וַיֵּצְאוּ מִן הָעִיר, "fled and went out of the city." And if we compare Jer. xxxix. 4, it is evident that before וְכָל־אַנְשֵׁי הַמ׳ still more has dropped out, not merely הַמֶּלֶךְ, which must have stood in the text, since according to ver. 5 the king was among the fugitives; but most probably the whole clause וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר רָאָם צִדְקִיָּהוּ מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה, since the words וְכָל־אַנְשֵׁי הַמ׳ have no real connection with what precedes, and cannot form a circumstantial clause so far as the sense is concerned. The "gate between the two walls, which (was) at or over (עַל) the king's garden," was a gate at the mouth of the Tyropœon, that is to say, at the south-eastern corner of the city of Zion; for, according to Neh. iii. 15, the king's garden was at the pool of Siloah, *i.e.* at the mouth of the Tyropœon (see Rob. *Pal.* ii. 142). By this defile, therefore, the approach to the city was barred by a double wall, the inner one running from Zion to the Ophel, whilst the outer one, at some distance off, connected the Zion wall with the outer surrounding wall of the Ophel, and most probably enclosed the king's garden. The subject to וַיֵּלֶךְ is הַמֶּלֶךְ, which has dropped out before וְכָל־אַנְשֵׁי הַמ׳. הָעֲרָבָה is the lowland valley on both sides of the Jordan (see at Deut. i. 1).—Ver. 5. As the Chaldæans were encamped around the city, the flight was immediately discovered. The Chaldæan army pursued him, and overtook him in the steppes of Jericho, whilst his own army was dispersed, all of which Ezekiel had foreseen in the Spirit (Ezek. xii. 3 sqq.). עַרְבוֹת יְרֵחוֹ are that portion of the plain of the Jordan which formed the country round Jericho (see at Josh. iv. 13).—Ver. 6. Zedekiah having been seized by the Chaldæans, was taken to the king of Babel in the Chaldæan headquarters at Riblah (see at ch. xxiii. 33), and was there put upon his trial. According to ver. 1, Nebuchadnezzar had commenced the siege of Jerusalem in person; but afterwards, possibly not till after the Egyptians who came to relieve the besieged city had been repulsed, he transferred the continuance of the siege, which was a prolonged one, to his generals, and retired to Riblah, to conduct the operations of the whole campaign from thence. דִּבֶּר מִשְׁפָּט אֶת־פּ׳, to conduct judicial proceedings with any one, *i.e.* to hear and judge him. For this

Jeremiah constantly uses the plural מִשְׁפָּטִים, not only in ch. lii. 9 and xxxix. 5, but also in ch. i. 16 and iv. 12.—Ver. 7. The punishment pronounced upon Zedekiah was the merited reward of the breach of his oath, and his hardening himself against the counsel of the Lord which was announced to him by Jeremiah during the siege, that he should save not only his own life, but also Jerusalem from destruction, by a voluntary submission to the Chaldæans, whereas by obstinate resistance he would bring an ignominious destruction upon himself, his family, the city, and the whole people (Jer. xxxviii. 17 sqq., xxxii. 5, xxxiv. 3 sqq.). His sons, who, though not mentioned in ver. 4, had fled with him and had been taken, and (according to Jer. lii. 10 and xxxix. 6) all the nobles (princes) of Judah, *sc.* those who had fled with the king, were slain before his eyes. He himself was then blinded, and led away to Babel, chained with double chains of brass, and kept a prisoner there till his death (Jer. lii. 11); so that, as Ezekiel (xii. 13) had prophesied, he came to Babel, but did not see the land, and died there. Blinding by pricking out the eyes was a common punishment for princes among the Babylonians and Persians (cf. Herod. vii. 18, and Brisson, *de regio Pers. princip.* p. 589). נְחֻשְׁתַּיִם, double brazen chains, are brazen fetters for the hands and feet. Samson was treated in the same manner by the Philistines (Judg. xvi. 21).

Vers. 8–21. *Destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. The people carried away to Babel* (cf. Jer. lii. 12–27, and xxxix. 8–10).—In this section we have first a general account of the destruction of the temple and city (vers. 8–10), and of the carrying away of the people (vers. 11 and 12), and then a more particular description of what was done with the metal vessels of the temple (vers. 13–17), and how the spiritual and secular leaders of the people who had been taken prisoners were treated (vers. 18–21).—Vers. 8–10. The destruction of Jerusalem, by the burning of the temple, of the king's palace, and of all the larger buildings, and by throwing down the walls, was effected by Nebuzaradan, the chief of the body-guard of Nebuchadnezzar, on the seventh day of the fifth month in the nineteenth year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. Instead of the *seventh* day we have the *tenth* in Jer. lii. 12. This difference might be reconciled, as proposed by earlier commentators, on the assumption that the burning of the city lasted several days, commencing on the seventh and ending on the tenth. But since there are similar differences met with afterwards (vers. 17 and 19) in the statement of numbers, which can only be accounted for from the substitution of similar numeral letters, we must assume that there is a change of this kind here. Which of the two dates is the correct one it is impossible to determine. The circumstance that the later Jews kept the ninth as a fast-day cannot be regarded as decisive evidence in favour of the date given in Jeremiah, as Thenius supposes; for in Zech. vii. 3 and viii. 19 the fasting of the fifth month is mentioned, but no day is given; and though in the Talmudic times the ninth day of the month began to be kept as a fast-day, this was not merely in remembrance of the Chaldæan destruction of Jerusalem, but of the Roman also, and of three other calamities which had befallen the nation (see the statement of the Gemara on this subject in Lightfoot, *Opp.* ii. p. 139, ed. Leusden, and in Köhler on Zech. vii. 3), from which we see that the Gemarists in the most unhistorical manner grouped together different calamitous events in one single day. The nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar corresponds to the eleventh of Zedekiah (see at ch. xxiv. 12). Nebuzaradan is not mentioned in Jer. xxxix. 3 among the Chaldæan generals who forced their way into the city, so that he must have been ordered to Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar after the taking of the city and the condemnation of Zedekiah, to carry out the destruction of the city, the carrying away of the people, and the appointment of a deputy-governor over those who were left behind in the land. This explains in a very simple manner how a month could intervene between their forcing their way into the city, at all events into the lower city, and the burning of it to the ground, without there being any necessity to assume, with Thenius, that the city of Zion held out for a month, which is by no means probable, for the simple reason that the fighting men had fled with Zedekiah and had been scattered in their flight. רַב־טַבָּחִים = שַׂר הַטַּבָּחִים in Gen. xxxvii. 36, xxxix. 1, was with the Babylonians, as with the Egyptians, the chief of the king's body-guard, whose duty it was to execute the sentences of death (see at Gen. xxxvii. 36). הַטַּבָּחִים answers to the הַכְּרֵתִי of the Israelites (2 Sam. viii. 18, etc.). In Jer. lii. 12 we have עֹמֵד לִפְנֵי מֶלֶךְ instead of עֶבֶד מֶלֶךְ, without the אֲשֶׁר, which is rarely omitted in prose, and בִּירוּשָׁלַםִ instead of יְרוּשָׁלַםִ: he came into Jerusalem, not he forced a way into the real Jerusalem (Thenius). The meaning is not altered by these two variations.—Ver. 9. By the words, " every great house," אֵת כָּל־בָּתֵּי יר׳ is more minutely defined: not all the houses to the very last, but simply all the large houses he burned to the very last, together with the temple and the royal palaces. The victors used one portion of the dwelling-houses for their stay in Jerusalem. He then had all the walls of the city destroyed. In Jeremiah כֹּל is omitted before חוֹמֹת, as not being required for the sense; and also the אֵת before רַב טַבָּחִים, which is indispensable to the sense, and has fallen out through a copyist's oversight.—Vers. 11, 12. The rest of the people he led away, both those who had been left behind in the city and the deserters who had gone over to the Chaldæans, and the remnant of the multitude. יֶתֶר הֶהָמוֹן, for which we have יֶתֶר הָאָמוֹן in Jer. lii. 15, has been interpreted in various ways. As אָמוֹן signifies an artist or artificer in Prov. viii. 30, and יֶתֶר הָעָם has just preceded it, we might be disposed to give the preference to the reading הָאָמוֹן, as Hitzig and Graf have done, and understand by it the remnant of the artisans, who were called הֶחָרָשׁ וְהַמַּסְגֵּר in ch. xxiv. 14, 16. But this view is precluded by Jer. xxxix. 9, where we find יֶתֶר הָעָם הַנִּשְׁאָרִים instead of יֶתֶר הָאָמוֹן or י׳ הֶהָמוֹן. These words cannot be set aside by the arbitrary assumption that they crept into the text through a copyist's error; for the assertion that they contain a purposeless repetition is a piece of dogmatical criticism, inasmuch as there is a distinction drawn in Jer. xxxix. 9 between יֶתֶר הָעָם הַנִּשְׁאָרִים בָּעִיר and יֶתֶר הָעָם הַנִּשְׁאָרִים. Consequently הָאָמוֹן is simply another form for הֶהָמוֹן (ה and א being interchanged) in the sense of a mass of people, and we have simply the choice left between two interpretations. Either יֶתֶר הָעָם הַנִּשְׁאָרִים בָּעִיר means the fighting people left in the city, as distinguished from the deserters who had fled to the Chaldæans, and הָאָמוֹן = יֶתֶר הֶהָמוֹן in Jer. lii. 15, or יֶתֶר הָעָם הַנִּשְׁאָרִים in Jer. xxxix. 9, the rest of the inhabitants of Jerusalem; or יֶתֶר הָעָם הנשׁ׳ בָּעִיר is the people left in Jerusalem (warriors and non-warriors), and יֶתֶר הֶהָמוֹן the rest of the population of the land outside Jerusalem. The latter is probably the preferable view, not only because full justice is thereby done to בָּעִיר in the first clause, but also because it is evident from the exception mentioned in ver. 12 that the deportation was not confined to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, but extended to the population of the whole land. The " poor people," whom he allowed to remain in the land as vine-dressers and husbandmen, were the common people, or people without property, not merely in Jerusalem, but throughout the whole land. דַּלַּת הָאָרֶץ = דַּלַּת עַם־הָאָרֶץ (ch. xxiv. 14). Instead of מִדַּלַּת we have in Jeremiah מִדַּלּוֹת: the plural used in an abstract sense, "the poverty," *i.e.* the lower people, "the poor who had nothing" (Jer. xxxix. 10). Instead of the *Chethîb* לְגָבִים from גּוּב, *secuit, aravit,* the *Keri* has לְיֹגְבִים from יָגַב, in the same sense, after Jer. lii. 16.—Vers. 13–17. The brazen vessels of the temple were broken in pieces, and the brass, and smaller vessels of brass, silver, and gold, were carried away. Compare Jer. lii. 17–23, where several other points are mentioned that have been passed over in the account before us. The pillars of brass (see 1 Kings vii. 15 sqq.), the stands (see 1 Kings vii. 27 sqq.), and the brazen sea (1 Kings vii. 23 sqq.), were broken in pieces, because it would have been difficult to carry these colossal things away without breaking them up. On the smaller vessels used in the worship (ver. 14) see 1 Kings vii. 40. In Jer. lii. 18 הַמִּזְרָקֹת are also mentioned. Ver. 15 is abridged still more in contrast with Jer. lii. 19, and only הַמַּחְתּוֹת and הַמִּזְרָקוֹת are mentioned, whereas in Jeremiah six different things are enumerated beside the candlesticks. אֲשֶׁר זָהָב . . . כֶּסֶף, "what was of gold, gold, what was of silver, silver, the captain of the guard took away," is a comprehensive description of the objects carried away. To this there is appended a remark in ver. 16 concerning the quantity of the brass of the large vessels, which was so great that it could not be weighed; and in ver. 17 a supplementary notice respecting the artistic work of the two pillars of brass. הָעַמּוּדִים וגו׳ is placed at the head absolutely: as for the pillars, etc., the brass of all these vessels was not to be weighed. In Jer. lii. 20, along with the brazen sea, the twelve brazen oxen under it are mentioned; and in the description of the pillars of brass (vers. 21 sqq.) there are several points alluded to which are omitted in our books, not only here, but also in 1 Kings vii. 16 sqq. For the fact itself see the explanation given at pp. 97–103. The omission of the twelve oxen in so condensed an account as that contained in our text does not warrant the inference that these words in Jeremiah are a spurious addition made by a later copyist, since the assumption that Ahaz sent the brazen oxen to king Tiglath-pileser cannot be proved from ch. xvi. 17 (see p. 407). Instead of שָׁלֹשׁ אַמָּה we must read חָמֵשׁ אַמּוֹת, *five* cubits, according to Jer. lii. 22 and 1 Kings vii. 16. The עַל־הַשְּׂבָכָה at the end of the verse is very striking, since it stands quite alone, and when connected with וְכָאֵלֶּה וגו' does not appear to yield any appropriate sense, as the second pillar was like the first not merely with regard to the trellis-work, but in its form and size throughout. At the same time, it is possible that the historian intended to give especial prominence to the similarity of the two pillars with reference to this one point alone.—Vers. 18–21 (cf. Jer. lii. 24–27). The principal officers of the temple and city, and sixty men of the population of the land, who were taken at the destruction of Jerusalem, Nebuzaradan sent to his king at Riblah, where they were put to death. *Seraiah*, the high priest, is the grandfather or great-grandfather of Ezra the scribe (Ezra vii. 1; 1 Chron. v. 40). *Zephaniah*, a priest of the second rank (כֹּהֵן מִשְׁנֶה; in Jer. כֹּהֵן הַמִּשְׁנֶה: see at ch. xxiii. 4), is probably the same person as the son of Maaseiah, who took a prominent place among the priests, according to Jer. xxi. 1, xxix. 25 sqq., and xxxvii. 3. The "three keepers of the threshold" are probably the three superintendents of the Levites, whose duty it was to keep guard over the temple, and therefore were among the principal officers of the sanctuary.—Ver. 19. From the city, *i.e.* from the civil authorities of the city, Nebuzaradan took a king's chamberlain (סָרִיס), who was commander of the men of war. Instead of אֲשֶׁר הוּא פָקִיד we find in Jer. lii. 25 אֲשֶׁר הָיָה פ', who had been commander, with an allusion to the fact that his official function had terminated when the city was conquered. "And *five* (according to Jeremiah *seven*) men of those who saw the king's face," *i.e.* who belonged to the king's immediate circle, *de intimis consiliariis regis*, and "the scribe of the commander-in-chief, who raised the people of the land for military service," or who enrolled them. Although הַסֹּפֵר has the article, which is omitted in Jeremiah, the following words שַׂר הַצָּבָא are governed by it, or connected with it in the construct state (Ewald, § 290, *d*). שַׂר הַצָּבָא is the commander-in-chief of the whole of the military forces, and הַמַּצְבִּא וגו' a more precise definition of הַסֹּפֵר, and not of שַׂר הַצָּבָא, which needed no such definition. "And sixty men of the land-population who were found in the city." They were probably some of the prominent men of the rural districts, or they may have taken a leading part in the defence of the city, and therefore were executed in Riblah, and not merely deported with the rest of the people.—The account of the destruction of the kingdom of Judah closes with וַיִּגֶל יְהוּדָה

in ver. 21, "thus was Judah carried away out of its own land;" and in vers. 22–26 there follows merely a brief notice of those who had been left behind in the land, in the place of which we find in Jer. lii. 28–40 a detailed account of the number of those who were carried away.

Vers. 22–26. *Installation of Gedaliah the governor. His assassination, and the flight of the people to Egypt.*—Much fuller accounts have been handed down to us in Jer. xl.–xliv. of the events which are but briefly indicated here.—Vers. 22, 23. Over the remnant of the people left in the land Nebuchadnezzar placed Gedaliah as governor of the land, who took up his abode in Mizpah. *Gedaliah*, the son of Ahikam, who had interested himself on behalf of the prophet Jeremiah and saved his life (Jer. xxvi. 24), and the grandson of Shaphan, a man of whom nothing more is known (see at ch. xxii. 12), had his home in Jerusalem, and, as we may infer from his attitude towards Jeremiah, had probably secured the confidence of the Chaldæans at the siege and conquest of Jerusalem by his upright conduct, and by what he did to induce the people to submit to the judgment inflicted by God; so that Nebuchadnezzar entrusted him with the oversight of those who were left behind in the land — men, women, children, poor people, and even a few princesses and court-officials, whom they had not thought it necessary or worth while to carry away (Jer. xl. 7, xli. 10, 16), *i.e.* he made him governor of the conquered land. Mizpah is the present *Nebi Samwil*, two hours to the north-west of Jerusalem (see at Josh. xviii. 26).—On hearing of Gedaliah's appointment as governor, there came to him "all the captains of the several divisions of the army and their men," *i.e.* those portions of the army which had been scattered at the flight of the king (ver. 5), and which had escaped from the Chaldæans, and, as it is expressed in Jer. xl. 7, had dispersed themselves "in the field," *i.e.* about the land. Instead of וְהָאֲנָשִׁים we have in Jer. xl. 7 the clearer expression וְאַנְשֵׁיהֶם, "and their men," whilst וְהָאֲנָשִׁים in our text receives its more precise definition from the previous word הַחֲיָלִים. Of the military commanders the following are mentioned by name: Ishmael, etc. (the וְ before יִשְׁמָעֵאל is explic., "and indeed Ishmael"). Ishmael, son of Mattaniah and grandson of Elishama, probably of the king's secretary mentioned in Jer. xxxvi. 12 and 20, of royal blood. Nothing further is known about the other names. We simply learn from Jer. xl. 13 sqq. that Johanan had warned Gedaliah against the treachery of Ishmael, and that when Gedaliah was slain by Ishmael, having disregarded the warning, he put himself at the head of the people and marched with them to Egypt, notwithstanding the dissuasions of Jeremiah (Jer. xli. 15 sqq.). Instead of "Johanan the son of Kareah," we have in Jer. xl. 8 "Johanan and Jonathan the sons of Kareah;" but it is uncertain whether וְיוֹנָתָן has crept into the text of Jeremiah from the previous יוֹחָנָן merely through a mistake, and this mistake has brought with it the alteration of בֶּן into בְּנֵי (Ewald), or whether וְיוֹנָתָן has dropped out of our text through an oversight, and this omission has occasioned the alteration of בני into בן (Thenius, Graf, etc.). The former supposition is favoured by the circumstance that in Jer. xl. 13, xli. 11, 16, Johanan the son of Kareah alone is mentioned. In Jer. xl. 8 וּבְנֵי עוֹפַי (*Chethîb* עיפי) stands before הַנְּטֹפָתִי, according to which it was not Seraiah who sprang from Netophah, but Ophai whose sons were military commanders. He was called *Netophathite* because he sprang from *Netopha* in the neighbourhood of Bethlehem (Neh. vii. 26; Ezra ii. 22), the identity of which with *Beit Nettif* is by no means probable (see at 2 Sam. xxiii. 28). The name יַאֲזַנְיָהוּ is written יְזַנְיָהוּ in Jeremiah; he was the son of the Maachathite, *i.e.* his father sprang from the Syrian district of Maacah in the neighbourhood of the Hermon (see at Deut. iii. 14).—Ver. 24. As these men were afraid of the vengeance of the Chaldæans because they had fought against them, Gedaliah assured them on oath that they had nothing to fear from them if they would dwell peaceably in the land, be submissive to the king of Babel, and cultivate the land (cf. Jer. xl. 9 and 10). "Servants of the Chaldees" are Chaldæan officials who were subordinate to the governor Gedaliah.—Ver. 25. In the seventh month, *i.e.* hardly two months after the destruction of Jerusalem, came Ishmael with ten men to Gedaliah at Mizpah, and murdered him together with the Jews and Chaldæans, whom he had with him as soldiers to do his bidding and for his protection. This occurred, according to Jer. xli. 1 sqq., when Gedaliah had received them hospitably and had invited them to eat with him. Ishmael was instigated to commit this murder by the Ammonitish king Baalis, and Gedaliah had previously been made acquainted with the intended crime and put upon his guard by Johanan, but had put no faith in the information (Jer. xl. 13–16).—Ver. 26. After Ishmael had performed this deed, and had also treacherously murdered a number of men, who had come to the temple with a sacrifice from Shechem, Shiloh, and Samaria, he took the Jews who were at Mizpah prisoners, with some kings' daughters among them, intending to take them over to the Ammonites; but as soon as his deed became known, he was pursued by Johanan and the rest of the military chiefs and was overtaken at Gibeon, whereupon those who had been led away by him went over to Johanan, so that he was only able to make his escape with eight men and get away to the Ammonites (Jer. xli. 4–15). Johanan then went with the rest of the military commanders and the people whom he had brought back into the neighbourhood of Bethlehem, with the intention of fleeing to Egypt for fear of the Chaldæans. There they did indeed have recourse to the prophet Jeremiah, to inquire of him the word of the Lord; but they did not allow themselves to be diverted from their intention by the word of the Lord which he announced to them, that if they remained in the land they need not fear anything from the king of Babel, but if they went to Egypt they should all perish there with sword, hunger, and pestilence, or by the prediction that the Lord would also deliver Pharaoh Hophra into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. xlii.). They went to Egypt notwithstanding, taking the prophet himself with them, and settled in different cities of Egypt, where they gave themselves up to idolatry, and did not suffer themselves to be drawn away from it even by the severe judgments which the prophet Jeremiah predicted as sure to fall upon them (Jer. xliii. and xliv.). In the verse before us we have simply a brief allusion to the eventual result of the whole affair. "Because they were afraid of the Chaldæans," namely, that they might possibly take vengeance upon them for the murder of the governor.

Vers. 27–30. *Jehoiachin delivered from prison, and exalted to royal honours* (cf. Jer. lii. 31–34).—In the thirty-seventh year after his deportation Jehoiachin was taken out of prison by Evil-merodach when he came to the throne. בִּשְׁנַת מָלְכוֹ, in the year of his becoming king, probably immediately after he had ascended the throne, for it was no doubt an act of grace at the commencement of his reign. נָשָׂא אֶת־רֹאשׁ, to lift up a person's head, *i.e.* to release him from prison and exalt him to civil honours and dignities (cf. Gen. xl. 13). On the coincidence of the thirty-seventh year of Jehoiachin's imprisonment and the commencement of the reign of Evil-merodach see the remarks at ch. xxiv. 12. Instead of the 27th day of the month, the 25th is given in Jeremiah, again through the substitution of similar numeral letters (see at ver. 8). *Evil-merodach:* אֱוִיל מְרֹדַךְ, *Εὐιαλ Μαρώδαχ* or *Εὐιαλμαρωδέκ* (LXX.); *Ἰλλοαροόδαμος*, possibly a copyist's error for *Ἰλμαροόδακος*, in the *Can. Ptol.*, and in other forms also: see M. v. Nieb. *Gesch. Ass.* p. 42, and Ges. *thes.* p. 41; compounded from the name of the Babylonian god *Merodach* (see at ch. xx. 12) and the prefix *Evil*, which has not yet been explained with certainty. He reigned two years, according to Berosus in Jos. c. *Ap.* i. 20, and the *Can. Ptol.*; and according to the verdict of Berosus, *προστὰς τῶν πραγμάτων ἀνόμως καὶ ἀσελγῶς*; and was murdered by his brother-in-law Neriglissor. The statement in Jos. *Ant.* x. 11, 2, to the effect that he reigned eighteen years, and that of Alex. Polyh. in Euseb. *Chron. arm.* i. p. 45, that he reigned twelve years, are evidently false.—Ver. 28. "He spake kindly to him (cf. Jer. xii. 6), and set his throne above the throne of the kings who were with him in Babel." This is not to be understood literally, as signifying that he assigned him a loftier throne than the other kings (Hitzig, Thenius), but figuratively: *loco honestiore eum habuit* (Ros.). The "kings with him" were dethroned kings, who were kept at the court like Jehoiachin to add to its splendour, just as Cyrus kept the conquered Crœsus by his side (Herod. i. 88).—Vers. 29, 30. "And he (Jehoiachin) changed his prison garments," *i.e.* took them off and put other regal clothing on (cf. Gen. xli. 42). "And ate continually before him all his life," *i.e.* ate at the king's table (cf. 2 Sam. ix. 7). Moreover a daily ration of food was supplied to him by the king for the maintenance of his retainers, who formed his little court. The כָּל־יְמֵי חַיָּיו of ver. 30, upon which Thenius throws suspicion without any reason, refers to Jehoiachin like that in ver. 29; for the historian intended to show how Jehoiachin had fared from the day of his elevation to the end of his life. At the same time, we cannot infer from this with any certainty that Jehoiachin died before Evil-merodach; for the favour shown to him might be continued by Evil-merodach's successor. We cannot make any safe conjecture as to the motives which induced Evil-merodach to pardon Jehoiachin and confer this distinction upon him. The higher ground of this joyful termination of his imprisonment lay in the gracious decree of God, that the seed of David, though severely chastised for its apostasy from the Lord, should not be utterly rejected (2 Sam. vii. 14, 15). At the same time, this event was also intended as a comforting sign to the whole of the captive people, that the Lord would one day put an end to their banishment, if they would acknowledge that it was a well-merited punishment for their sins that they had been driven away from before His face, and would turn again to the Lord their God with all their heart.

THE END.

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